

MacHome

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Solutions for Work, Play, & Education

iBook 2001

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Mac OS X Tips

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July 2001

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The new iBooks are a perfect match for Mac® OS X®. It's the most advanced, most easy to use and visually stunning operating system ever created. And you won't miss any of it on iBook's breathtaking 1024 x 768 TFT display.

With iMovie, iTunes and iTools, the new iBook is designed to fit your life. Fortunately, it's priced so you can still afford to have one. Starting at \$1,299.*



Think different.

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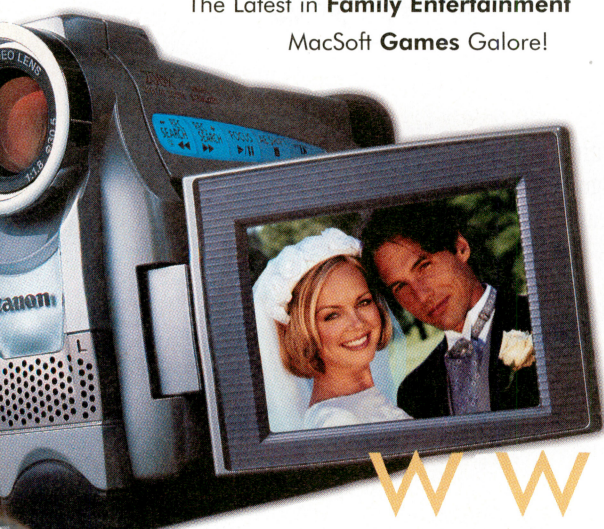
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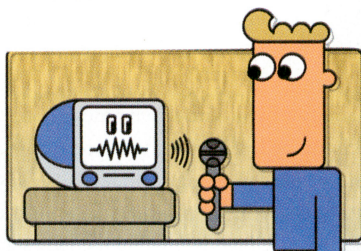
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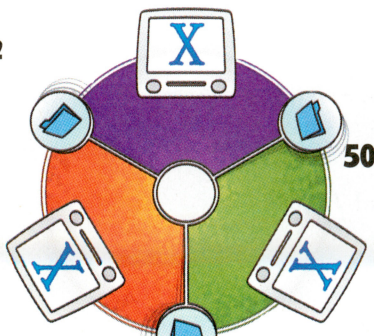
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- ★★ m500

Entertainment

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- ★★★★★ Escape from Monkey Island
- ★★★★★ Pro Pinball: Fantastic Journey

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Rating System

- ★★★★★ **Mac-nificent.** You gotta get it. No flaws.
- ★★★★ **Excellent.** Recommended even if it has a minor flaw or two.
- ★★★ **Average.** Despite prolems still a worthwhile product.
- ★★ **Below Average.** Has serious flaws that limit its usefulness or fun.
- ★ **Poor.** Avoid this product at all costs.

It's Time to Shop

May 1, we went to Apple's Cupertino headquarters for the unveiling of the totally revamped iBook, and last week we were invited to an advance briefing and tour of its first-ever retail store.

Today, Apple announced that it will open 25 stores by the end of this year, staffed with salespeople proficient in all things Macintosh — people who should be able to answer most any question you toss at them. Apple says the stores will also stock more than 300 third-party software titles and a wide array of peripherals, giving you more choices than you can find outside of a mail order company's catalog or

Website — but with instant gratification because you can take it home.

What's the benefit to you? You get a hands-on, try-before-you-buy experience that had been available only to those lucky enough to have a good

Apple reseller in their area, or those who've been able to attend a Macworld Expo and meet people who actually develop the product. If you're able to visit one of the stores, give us your firsthand impressions: stores@machome.com.

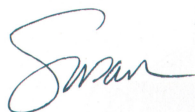
As for the new iBook, all I can say is "Wow." It's portability, power, and style at an affordable price. We give you all the details in Newswire, and will have a hands-on review next month, complete with suggestions on what you can actually do with it once you get it home.

changes we've made to *MacHome* over the past six months. More workshops, how-to articles, tips, and pointers have garnered hundreds of letters and suggestions. We read them all, and respond to as many as possible. Your input is invaluable — after all, we write for you, not for us. Keep them coming! Try letters@machome.com.

As many of you know, we redesigned and relaunched www.machome.com at the end of March. So far, the response has been tremendous. If you've not taken time to visit, I encourage you to do so; here's a look at what you'll find:

- **Daily news:** Each day we provide a news synopsis and a handy link to full stories from around the Web.
- **Reviews:** Search over a thousand product reviews by product name, category, or company name.
- **Daily tips:** Each day try a new tip on our home page, and search a database of archived tips from the past.

We also publish our most popular features and how-to articles, and later this year we'll be offering content, guides, and projects just for subscribers. Drop by often, and let us know what you think: feedback@machome.com goes to us here in the office.



Enjoy —
Susan Ford, *Publisher*

Keep the letters coming

Many of you have commented on the

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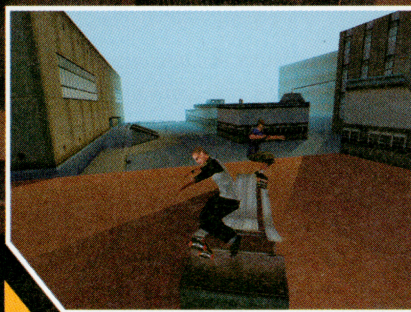
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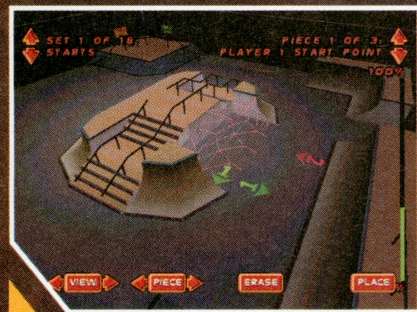
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You Really Like Us

My daughter and I purchased two iMacs within a couple of weeks of each other and on registering, we were offered a trial subscription to three different Mac magazines. I chose *Macworld* while my daughter chose *MacHome*. We have both shared our free magazines with each other, and I must write and inform you that we both think yours is a much more helpful publication. Your articles are better directed to the home user (my daughter and I) with help for the newcomer to the Mac world, while *Macworld* tends to feature articles directed at the business market. We have both decided to buy your magazine over any other Mac magazine out there; thanks for a great magazine that we look forward to reading each month.

Michael O'Dell and Lesley Hertzberg

Stuck On Macs

Can you direct me to how to find a replacement bumper sticker? I need to replace my 14 year-old car, but when I do my "I'd rather be driving a Mac" bumper sticker will be lost forever. Do you know if I can replace it or get something similar? I've looked at the Apple.com site but don't see how to ask Apple.

Thank you again for the *MacHome* magazine and Website.

Ann Kennedy

We're afraid that that bumper sticker may be a collector's item of sorts. Apple hasn't recently sold such merchandise, so your best bet is to try eBay. New Macs also come with Apple logo bumper stickers, which may make a good substitute.

A G4 Owner's Secret

In the April 2001 issue the *iMac Buyer's Guide* has been included with the regular edition of *MacHome* (of course, you

know this!). I see that it's a pullout section. Does that mean if the reader does not have an iMac it should not be read and just thrown away? I think many of your readers that do not have iMacs still read the information (I do) and iMac people read *MacHome*. I like the new format. The "how-tos" are great.

Patricia McGrath

You're right; the iMac Buyer's Guide isn't just for iMac users. Both magazines offer solutions and ideas for all Mac; Buyer's Guide is just more oriented toward new Mac users.

G4 Stilts

In your February issue you had a tidbit about risers to go under a G4 tower sitting on carpet to increase air flow and help prevent the fan opening from getting clogged. I accidentally left my copy of your magazine on an airplane (I hope someone else picked it up!) before I could look up the item in more detail and order it, so I'm wondering if you can tell me where I can find more info on that product.

Scott Crawford

Contour Design (www.contourdesign.com) makes risers that work with iMacs or G4s.

Rating Frame Rates

As a Mac user considering the purchase of an OrangeMicro iBot Pro Web camera for my beige Power Mac G3/233 desktop, I was a little disappointed to see your April review. The FAQ section of Orange Micro's Website indicates that capturing 30 frames-per-second at 640x480 will require a hard drive capable of 18MB per second throughput. New FireWire drives are now coming on the market that can meet that specification. It would have



been helpful to know the systems on which your reviewer tested the iBot as justification for only a 3-apple rating. Nonetheless, you have a great magazine which I look forward very much to seeing each month.

Jack Adair

We tested that on a bevy of systems including PowerBooks, iBooks, iMacs, and G4s. None allowed the iBot to capture at 30 frames-per-second. At the time of review, the packaging didn't list that information, and we're still disappointed that you would have to buy a special, high-end drive to achieve this frame rate.

It Will Keep Coming

Iam trying to remember, but I think it was the January issue... This was the BEST Mac magazine I have EVER seen and that goes way back with *Macworld*, *MacAddict*, and *MacUser* (as well as *MacWeek*).

It was well laid out — unlike some other good magazines that don't know how to lay out the information with well-encapsulated articles, displayed for readability.

The issue had brief articles, lots of tips, plenty of useful advice, and reviews of new stuff, too. I just remember while reading it in various places in my home that I thought it was superb and worth second, third, and fourth looks.

And, if CompUSA only stocked some of the items that got good reviews, I could have saved myself from buying the

wrong mouse for my PowerBook. Please, please, keep that kind of magazine coming.

Bob Guthrie

Sherlock: Find Mac Users

In "Back to Basics" from May, 2001, Mary Ann Ronga had a question about getting help with her Mac. She has had her iMac over a year and has not found any help for using it. We don't know where Mary lives, but I was hoping that you might suggest finding a local Mac Users Group for help. Macs have good tutorials, as you suggested, but it is so much better to get help from local Mac advocates in person.

Try the Apple User Groups locator <http://www.apple.com/usergroups/locator/>.

Ray Boston

Beige Burial

I have been a subscriber to *MacHome* for several years, and I find it to be an excellent resource for office and home. I especially appreciate your product reviews. I am about to purchase an iMac DV for personal use (I already have one for the office). I want to donate my six year-old Performa 636 and Apple Stylewriter II printer to a charitable organization. Both are in excellent condition. For tax purposes I need the estimated value of my donation. Can you provide this? If not, where could I get this information?

Bruce S Turner

Take a look at our article on recycling old Macs on page 22 of this issue. Discover different places to donate, and those organizations will appraise the Mac's value.

Try Stickies

After using a PC for a couple of years, I was talked into purchasing a Mac. I ended up with a dual-processor G4. There are just so many features on it I hardly know where to start, and your magazine has been a godsend for me.

The articles are written so even I can understand them, and I am not computer literate. It is such a joy to receive it. Each issue has so much that you can use in your workshop section. I haven't had time to test them yet but I have started using *MacHome* as a reference library. On each issue I put a Post-It note to remind me of the items I want to try or check out, so I don't have to go back and wonder what was in an issue. I love my Mac and since I found your magazine, I love it even more. I looked at the other Mac magazines before subscribing and yours is definitely the "best."

Stella Magic

write to us...

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Apple's New iBooks: On the Road Again

Apple CEO Steve Jobs introduced a new line of **500MHz G3 iBooks** at a special press event in Cupertino. The glistening white notebooks blur the distinction between the professional PowerBook G4 and the consumer iBook line by packing more pro features into a small, consumer form factor and price.

With about the same footprint as a sheet of paper, these magnesium and polycarbonate-based ("the same material as bulletproof-vests," Jobs pointed out) iBooks deliver a new option for those in search of a portable computer. It's hard to imagine them getting any smaller while still retaining the full-sized keyboard. The notebook also shed weight. At 4.9 pounds, it's about two pounds lighter than its predecessor, with a thinner silhouette – the new iBook is only 1.3" thick.

The changes are more than skin deep. Like the previous iBooks, these models sport 12.1" displays, but can present a resolution of 1024 x 768 pixels. Conversely, the original iBooks worked at a maximum of 800 x 600 pixels, effectively giving the new units 60 percent more area in which to display information.

"We think the new iBook is the perfect product to be the center of your digital lifestyle," Jobs noted. These models feature

the standard ports such as

FireWire, USB, Ethernet, AirPort, and a modem port, giving the iBook versatility in most situations.

The newest port on the iBook is the VGA video-out plug to connect an external monitor. And the new iBooks still retain the composite audio and video mini-plug to connect to a TV. The ATI Rage Mobility 128 video chip provides the muscle to handle these tasks.

Shipped in mid-May, the iBooks are available in four configurations. All share the same connectivity and 500MHz G3 processor. The bottom option includes 64MB RAM and the top three bundle 128MB. The media bay options are a CD-ROM, DVD-ROM, CD-RW, or combination DVD-ROM/CD-RW drive for the four models, and their prices are \$1,299, \$1,499, \$1,599, and \$1,799 respectively.

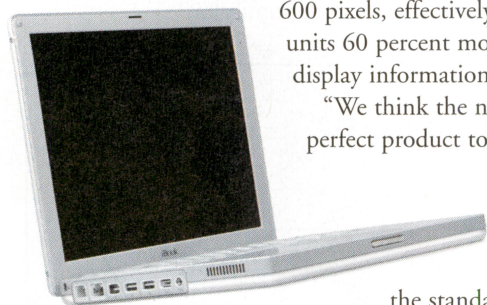
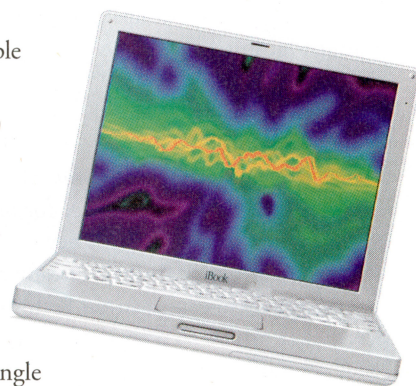
Those of us at the press event were impressed with the new iBooks, reluctant to pass demonstration models along to our colleagues after getting a few hands-on minutes. But what really

got us going was the announcement that Apple has already sold 23,000 notebooks to a single school district in Richmond, Virginia.

"People have questioned our commitment to education," Jobs said. "We're more committed than ever. This is the single largest sale of portable computers in education ever. Apple is thrilled to partner with Henrico County Public Schools because when every student and teacher has access to wirelessly-networked mobile computing, learning reaches far beyond the classroom."

Dr. Mark Edwards, superintendent of Henrico County Public Schools, explained that they chose the iBook because experience showed that other platforms cost significantly more to support. The starting price for schools to get in the iBook game is \$1,199.

Apple, 800-692-7753, www.apple.com

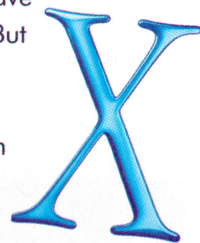


Stores Near You

Rumors of Apple retail stores have haunted the Internet for months. But for once, the rumormongers were right. Apple opened the first of a chain of retail stores on May 19 in McLean, Virginia. Other locations will include New York City and Chicago. The stores open in the wake

of Steve Jobs' Macworld Expo comments about the poor experience customers have while shopping for computers. No more details were available at press time, but we'll keep you posted.

Apple, 800-692-7753, www.apple.com



Whoa – Another New Printer

Epson has pulled back the curtain to reveal the **Stylus Photo 785EPX** ink jet printer. Developed for digital camera owners, this new printer delivers convenient photo printing with and without a computer, compatibility with popular digital camera memory cards like CompactFlash Types I and II, Memory Stick, and SmartMedia. It's also the first printer to

use Print Image Matching, a technology that helps digital cameras like the new Kyocera Finecam S3 and printers work together to produce the best possible prints.

Now for the dirty details. For \$249 you get a printer that spits out up to six colors at 2880x720 dots per inch and a CompactFlash Type I adapter. Your camera doesn't use CompactFlash storage? Never fear,

Epson thought of that, too. Just exchange the adapter for a Memory

Stick or SmartMedia adapter. Once you've sorted out the compatibility issue, the printer's built-in card slot lets you print photos without a computer. When the situation calls for a computer — maybe you want to try out the bundled Software Film Factory or ArcSoft PhotoImpression software — there's a USB port waiting.

The Stylus Photo 785EPX has another trick up its sleeve. It uses Epson's BorderFree photo printing technology to do away with ugly paper perforations on 4 x 6", 5 x 7", and 8 x 10" photos.

Epson, 800-922-8911, www.epsonstore.com



Smaller than the Palm of Your Hand

Can you fit a full-featured digital camera into a shape the size of a credit card? Kyocera did. The 3.34 megapixel

Finecam S3 camera sports a 2X optical zoom, USB interface and a 16MB MultiMedia Card (MMC) for storage. Bundled with the camera are a MMC USB card reader, to make retrieving photos from the camera fast and easy even without a computer, and ArcSoft's PhotoImpression image editing

software. You should now be available to find the Finecam S3 in stores with a retail price of \$699.

Kyocera, 800-526-0266, www.yashica.com



Summer Camp for Teachers

Apple is running a series of five-day workshops through July and August that are for teachers who want hands-on experience with using dynamic, multimedia content in the classroom. University campuses across the United States will host the program. The registration fee is \$500, which covers room and board on campus. Each participant will get an iBook to use during the workshop, along with a chance to play with digital cameras, probeware and other high-tech educational toys.

Apple, 800-692-7753, www.apple.com/education/institutes/

It's a Photo! No, It's a Screensaver!

Callisto's PhotoParade Maker turns digital photos into slideshows and screensavers. Users can also create

desktop wallpaper from a favorite photo. The software includes editing tools for touch-ups, tiling, narration and animation. **PhotoParade** is sold in three theme bundles: Standard Edition (\$20), which includes four

multi-purpose themes; Premium Edition (\$30), which includes nine themes; and Super Edition (\$40), which comes with 38 themes including Wedding Album, New Baby, and a variety of holiday designs.

Callisto, www.photoparade.com



Securing OS X

Symantec has plans for Apple's new operating system. Norton Utilities, AntiVirus, Personal Firewall, Internet Security, and SystemWorks should now play nicely with Mac OS X to keep your data safe. Look for improved support to arrive later this year as Symantec continues to fine-tune its software.

Symantec, www.symantec.com

Kodak Hits the Dock

Future models of Kodak consumer digital cameras will incorporate the EasyShare system, an example of how Kodak is connecting devices to its infrastructure and the Internet to provide people with easy ways to share pictures.

The Kodak EasyShare system camera dock makes picture transfers and recharging a camera's batteries one-touch easy. Once the camera is placed in the dock, pictures are automatically uploaded to the computer and the dock recharges the camera's battery pack in less than three hours. The system also includes software that allows users to connect to the Internet to e-mail or print pictures.

The **DX3500** (\$300) and the **DX3600 Zoom** (\$400) are the first in Kodak's line of EasyShare compatible digital cameras. With 2.2-megapixel resolution, both cameras take high quality pictures suitable for everything from emailing to printing 8 x 10" photos. The DX3500 features a 3X digital zoom, auto white balance, and close-up mode that are designed to deliver better pictures. The other model sports 2X optical zoom as well as 3X digital zoom, with continuous digital video and sound. Both cameras offer 8MB of internal memory so your camera can capture up to 48 pictures without an external CompactFlash memory card.

The camera dock (\$80) includes a rechargeable battery pack and AC adapter. It connects via USB, so it's always ready for your camera to upload and recharge. Kodak's latest arrivals should be available now.

Kodak, 888-368-6600, www.kodak.com



Lexmark Printers Hit New Low Pricing

The good news is that Lexmark has created a new Z-Line of color inkjet USB printers. The bad news? There isn't any. The prices on the four models range from just \$79 to \$139.

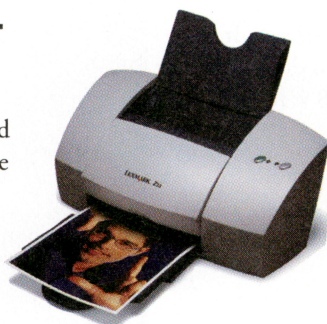
At the low end is the **Z23** (\$79, or \$49 after a rebate). This model is aimed at the novice who doesn't need a dual head printer, although its single head can be upgraded. At 1200 x 1200 dots per inch (dpi), the Z23 prints five color pages per minute (ppm).

Up a step is the **Z33** (\$89), with a resolution of 2400 x 1200 dpi. It churns out five ppm in color, like the Z23, but its black-ink printing speed is faster at nine ppm compared to the Z23's eight.

Home users who do a lot of printing should take a look at the midrange model, the **Z43** (\$99). A 2400 x 1200 dpi, six color ppm, 12 black-ink ppm, and a PC parallel port plus USB connections make this a versatile printer.

The flagship model of the new Z-line is the **Z53** (\$139). Made for SOHO, it racks up a 2400 x 1200 dpi, eight color ppm and a fast 16 black-ink ppm. This model also features enhanced peer-to-peer networking, so users can check its ink levels and printing queue as well as print documents from multiple computers. Like the Z43, the Z53 can connect via USB or a PC parallel port.

Catch the Z-line now at major retailers.
Lexmark, 888-539-6275, www.lexmark.com



Doing the Drive Combo

If a new 733MHz Apple G4 with SuperDrive isn't in your future, don't despair.

LaCie and CD CyClone have each announced external FireWire combination drives that can read and burn DVDs and CDs. The CD

CyClone **DVDRevo**

(\$990) reads

DVDs at 6X,

and

burns at

2X. It

treats CDs with

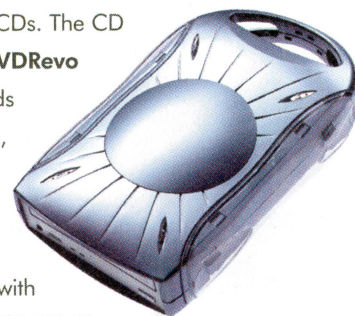
speeds of 28X4X24X.

LaCie's DVD-R/CD-RW drive hits the same speeds on both media.

CD CyClone, 714-247-0099,

www.cdyclone.com

La Cie, 503-844-4502, www.lacie.com



Shadows Online

Tad Williams, renowned author of bestsellers like *Tailchaser's Song* and *Otherland* (and incidentally a former Apple employee), is dreaming of an online empire. The empire is **Shadowmarch**. Its story has yet to be told. But you can watch it unfold chapter by chapter exclusively online. Puzzle, the world's worst jester, the Twilight People, the twins Barrick and Briony, and others live in the shadow of a castle built with millions of stones colored a thousand shades of darkness. Read the prelude for free. The rest of the story will be available for a small per-chapter fee, emulating Stephen King's *The Plant*.
Tad Williams, www.shadowmarch.com

Mama Mia!

Mia, Kutoka's favorite mouse, is on the loose and changing history. In **Mia: Just in Time** (\$25), the gusty heroine must jump through time to stop her house from burning down. Along the way, math puzzles for kids ages 6 to 10 blend into the game so that kids practice adding, subtracting, and handling fractions to help Mia's rescue mission. Look for Mia: Just in Time this fall.



Not that Mia doesn't take time out from heroics! Click & Create with Mia (\$25), due at the end of this year, is arts-and-crafts fun for kids of all ages. Packaged in a carrying case stuffed with pre-cut pieces, cartoon eyes, and a bottle of glue, the CD features five creative centers with activities ranging from drawing, painting, and pasting to the creation of greeting cards, multimedia projects, and interactive animation.

Kutoka Interactive, 514-849-4800, www.kutoka.com

Sorenson Gets Personal

Sorenson Media has leaped into personal broadcasting by announcing **vCast**, a service that enables people to easily and affordably stream live or on-demand video and audio content to anyone, anywhere, at anytime.

After downloading the vCast client and filling out an online registration form, a vCast user can stream live video from a camera connected to a computer, or compress finished video. The content is then posted to the Internet for vCast to stream. Pricing is based on the length of the stream and estimated audience size. Look for broadcast power to be at your fingertips this summer.

Sorenson, 801-287-9450,

www.sorenson.com

Sonnet Upgrades

Good news for anyone using Sonnet Crescendo or Encore processor upgrade cards — the Encore series is completely compatible with OS X, no software required. With the exception of the Crescendo/PB and Crescendo/NuBus upgrades, cards in the Crescendo series will also work after a software download (\$30).

Sonnet, 949-472-2772,

www.sonnettech.com

Cool Pics

The CoolPix 775 (\$450) and the **CoolPix 995** (\$900) are fresh Nikon entries into the digital camera jungle.

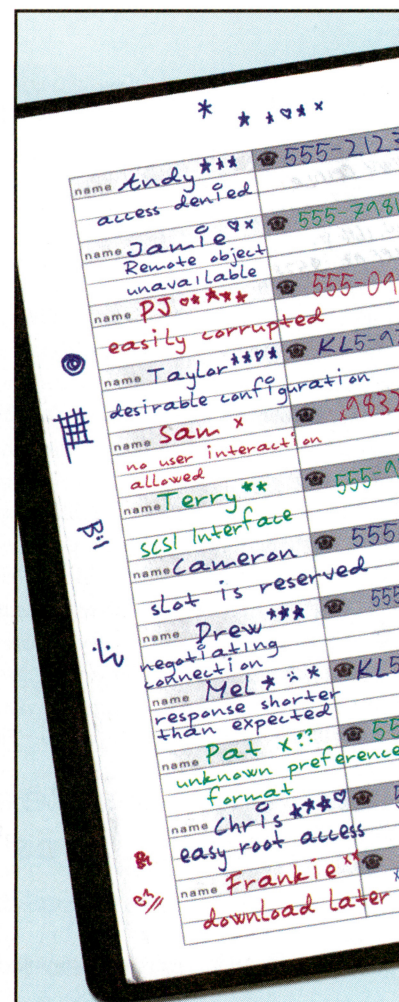
The 2.14 megapixel CCD CoolPix 775, like Kodak's new EasyShare cameras, uploads photos from the camera to a computer or the Web with one click of a button. It also boasts a 3X optical zoom, plus an 8MB CompactFlash memory card.

The 3.14 megapixel CCD CoolPix 995 has a 4X optical zoom, pop-up flash, and ships with a 16MB CompactFlash card. Each camera has a USB connection, but only the CoolPix 995 is bundled with a USB cable.

Rechargeable lithium-ion batteries and a suite of image editing software round out both packages.

Nikon, 800-645-6689,

www.nikonusa.com



Don't you have enough things to keep track of?

At VersionTracker we've got the software covered — all the very latest applications in Classic and OS X.

We can even personalize your updates so you only get the applications you care about.

Check us out online at www.versiontracker.com

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Part of the TechTracker network.

Ethernet to Go

Belkin has introduced its new line of Network Interface Cards (NIC) and a USB 10/100 Ethernet Adapter. Designed for the SOHO environment, these devices allow users with older Macs to easily connect computers to broadband modems and Ethernet networks. The **Desktop NIC** (\$25) takes up a PCI slot to add 10/100Base-T Ethernet capability, and also allows the user to keep resources available to a network even when the computer is in sleep mode.

The **Notebook NIC** (\$50) and **CardBUS NIC** (\$60) are new laptop 10/100Base-T cards; the first uses a PC Card slot, while the other uses a CardBUS slot and enables network resources from sleep mode. Also for laptops is Belkin's new seven-foot long retractable network/ISDN cable (\$25). An eCoupler+, which lets users run two devices from one wall jack, and an eAdapter to plug into a wall outlet are included.

As for the **USB 10/100 Ethernet Adapter** (\$50), it slides into a computer's USB port to create a plug-and-play environment for all Ethernet networking peripherals like hubs or cable modems.

Belkin, 800-223-5546, www.belkin.com



TLC Favorites Return for New Adventures

The Learning Company has quietly been preparing for the return of the infamous Carmen Sandiego, hiding valuables and hoarding maps. **Carmen Sandiego World Treasures of Knowledge** (\$25) will take you around the world this September on a madcap dash to capture thieves while showing off your grasp of history, geography and culture.

The ClueFinders Club is also on the move again, this time to San Francisco for **The Incredible Toy Store Adventure** (\$25), due in August. Owen and Joni are suddenly only three inches tall! Kids ages 7 to 10 will need language arts, math, geography, and logic skills to get to the bottom of the mystery.

With four new Reader Rabbit games now out from The Learning Company for \$20 apiece, you might be seeing rabbits,

rabbits everywhere. Preschool Sparkle Star Rescue, Kindergarten Bounce Down in Balloon Town, 1st Grade Capers on Cloud Nine, and 2nd Grade Mis-cheese-ious Dreamship Adventures run the gauntlet of school skills like reading and arithmetic to help kids get a jump on classwork while having fun.

The Learning Company, 800-395-0277, www.learningco.com



Canon Delivers Triplets

Canon has expanded its line of consumer-friendly FireWire digital camcorders by adding the **ZR20** (\$799), **ZR25 MC** (\$899), and **ZR30 MC** (\$999). Each model fits 10X optical zoom, analog input, photo mode, digital sound, a microphone terminal, and both manual and automatic settings into a one pound package.

The ZR25 and ZR30 use a MultiMedia (MMC) or a Secure

Digital Memory

Card (which has

built-in copy pro-

tection) to store

up to 60 photos.

Both come with an

8MB MMC. These

models also support progressive scan, which

cuts down motion blur. Only the ZR30, howev-

er, has an accessory shoe for attaching a light or microphone.

Canon, 800-652-2666, www.canondv.com



Iomega Microdrive

Iomega's Microdrive line, developed in conjunction with IBM, is all about portability. With capacities ranging from 340 MB to 1 GB on a one-inch disk drive, the Microdrive works with portable handheld devices that use CompactFlash storage, such as digital music players, personal digital assistants, and digital cameras. In addition, it stores multiple data types including MP3, text, JPEG, and voice. Microdrives are currently available in 340MB (\$240) and 1GB (\$490) flavors. Iomega, 888-426-5214, www.iomega.com



Introducing Sony's DCR-PC9 MiniDV HandyCam

One pound of electronics can hide more features than you'd think. Sony's new **DCR-PC9 MiniDV HandyCam** digital camcorder (\$1300), for instance, fits in a 10X optical and 120X digital zoom, a 2.5" color LCD screen, and an InfoLithium battery to let you shoot up to two hours without recharging. Interface options include FireWire and USB for transferring footage to a computer, or Sony's Memory Stick for storing still photos or short movies. Take a closer look at the DCR-PC9 in stores now.

Sony, 800-222-7669, www.sel.sony.com

Games Just Keep Shipping

It's shaping up to be a monster-bashing, Wonderland-inducing, 900° summer, with major titles shipping from all of the top game companies. MacSoft, Aspyr Media, Graphic Simulations, and MacPlay all have new ways to entertain.

MacSoft is currently shipping several titles with more on the way. On shelves right now are **Centipede**, **Pong**, and **Breakout** — all revised versions of classic videogames of yore. Shortly after you read this, **Vampire: The Masquerade — Redemption** will be on shelves. This title is a role-playing game with extended multiplayer abilities; look forward to grabbing a few friends and questing together. www.wizworks.com/macsoft



Aspyr Media is also shipping new games. Try the acclaimed **Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2**, which puts you on a skateboard for a wild ride. In July **The Sims: House Party** takes your favorite Sims characters online to meet your real, virtual neighbors. Third-person action game **Alice** is a dark visit to Louis Carroll's mad fantasy world. Stop the evil queen from controlling Wonderland.

And **Tomb Raider: Chronicles** takes you on another Croftian adventure. When finished, use the level editor to design your own Tomb Raider game. Tomb-Raiding fun should be on sale now. www.aspyr.com

GraphSim has its own games on the shelves. **Baldur's Gate: Tales of the Sword Coast** is an expansion pack to the original Baldur's Gate. This role-playing title requires the original and adds new characters and stories to explore. **Summoner** is another role-playing epic pitting you against monsters and other fantasy baddies. Both games should be released as this issue hits newsstands. www.graphsim.com



Don't Let Your Fingers Do the Walking

MacSpeech has released ScriptPaks for America Online 5.0 and FileMaker Pro 5.0. **ScriptPaks** work with the company's free ListenDo! program and its speech recognition program iListen to let your voice take the place of your fingers while using the computer. The America Online set (\$10) has 22 common commands. The FileMaker Pro 5 set (\$25) is packed with 30 database commands.

MacSpeech, 603-644-7253, www.macspeech.com

Where's the Remote?

For those of you who like to pace while computing, Interlink Electronics now offers a wireless keyboard to match a cordless mouse. The **RemotePoint RF Combo** (\$349) lets you range as far as 100' from the computer, with no line-of-sight restrictions. An integrated laser pointer along with the freedom of motion also makes the Combo a product to consider for anyone making a lot of presentations in meeting rooms.

Interlink Electronics, 800-340-1331, www.interlinkelec.com

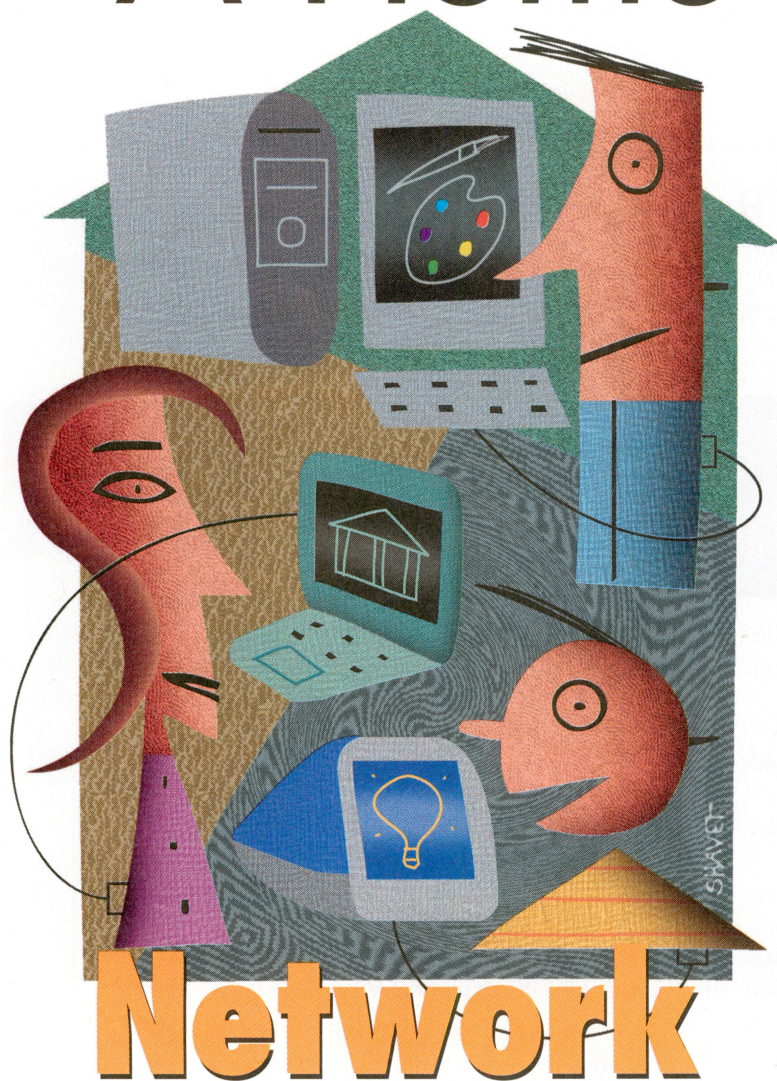


MacSoft Tips Its Hand

MacSoft has lined up **Tropico** and **Fly II** for a summer release. **Tropico** lets you be the dictator of a Central American country. **Fly II** is the sequel to a realistic flight simulator, now with Internet play mode.

Four other games should be released in the top half of 2002. **Max Payne** is a third-person action game with a gritty New York crime story. **Myth III** continues the classic third-person fantasy battle series. **Stronghold** is a strategy city-building simulation in medieval England. Finally, MacSoft will put you on course to conquer the world in **Civilization III**, the latest in the franchise that defined the strategy genre. Don't think that MacSoft has shown all its cards, though — more surprises are on the way.

Building A Home



Macs have proven to be such well-rounded machines that it's little wonder many households own more than one: A Power Macintosh for Dad, the graphic designer; an iBook for Mom, the attorney; and an iMac for the kids. The more computers that you have in your home, the more likely you are to benefit from a small home network. A minimal investment in networking equipment will let you quickly share files, printers, and even a single Internet connection among your Macintoshes.

Please note that in this article we reference Mac OS 9 only. At press time, a number of important networking utilities had not yet been ported to Mac OS X.

Getting Connected

There are three types of networks that you can build at home: Ethernet, AirPort, and a mixture of the two. We'll discuss each one in depth to help you decide which network is best for you.

The Basic Ethernet Network

The most common way to connect your home computers is through a simple Ethernet network. This requires an Ethernet cable for each Macintosh and a central Ethernet hub (a small device that routes data traffic between computers). You're going to have to do a bit of research before you head to your local computer superstore, however.

Ethernet networking operates at three different speeds, known as 10Base-T (Ethernet), 100Base-T (Fast Ethernet), and 1000Base-T (Gigabit Ethernet), each ten times faster than its predecessor. The speed at which your Macintosh can communicate with the rest of the network depends upon the speed of its built-in networking hardware. Older Macs, such as

the original series iMacs and iBooks, have 10Base-T networking. Newer Macs, such as the slot-loading iMacs and FireWire iBooks, include 100Base-T networking. The latest PowerMacs are thus far the only models to use 1000Base-T networking.

Check your manuals to determine the networking speed of each Macintosh so you can decide what speed of hub to purchase. You can mix networking speeds without a problem, but the network will only run as fast as its hub. So, let's say you want to connect two original iMacs with 10Base-T networking and a new iMac with 100Base-T networking. The maximum speed the iMacs can speak to each is 10Base-T, so in this example, you could save a few dollars by purchasing a 10Base-T Ethernet hub. Now let's say you have two newer iMacs

By **Chris McVeigh**

(100Base-T) and one older iMac (10Base-T) instead. In this case, the two newer iMacs will be able to communicate with each other at 100Base-T, but only if you connect them via a 100Base-T Ethernet hub. The network automatically lowers its speed to 10Base-T to speak to the older iMac. Several vendors, such as Asante and Farallon, offer 10Base-T hubs for approximately \$50 to \$60. 3com's 100Base-T hubs start at \$90.

Ethernet cabling is rather inexpensive, running between \$6 to \$10 for a standard six-foot cable. The wiring looks like telephones cables on steroids—at each end, there is a wide plastic connector with a locking prong. Ask a salesperson if you are unsure what cables to purchase. Inform him that you need 10Base-T compatible cables (or 100Base-T cables if you purchase a 100Base-T hub) with standard RJ-45 connectors.

Once you've collected the equipment you need, it's time to construct the network. Place the hub in a central location, and plug in its power adapter. Now, run an Ethernet cable from each computer into the hub's downlink port. (The hub you purchase should also have a single uplink port. We'll talk about that a little later.) You're now ready to start sharing data and devices with the rest of the network.

The AirPort Network

An AirPort wireless network is an attractive alternative for users with iBooks and PowerBooks. Data is transmitted via radio waves, allowing computers to be operated up to 150 feet about from the source.

You can create an AirPort network with Apple's AirPort Base Station (\$299),

a wireless hub that routes data between other wireless devices. Each computer on the network must also be equipped with an AirPort networking card (\$99). The AirPort Base Station is configured from any Macintosh using the AirPort Administrator utility, and each computer on the network is configured via the AirPort Setup utility. (A second, less expensive option is to run a Software Base Station. It requires several additional considerations that we do not have room to cover in this article. Please visit www.machome.com for more details.)

It's important to note that you make several sacrifices when you opt for a wireless network. The first, obviously, is money. A simple Ethernet network connecting three computers runs about \$80-\$100. A comparable AirPort network costs \$300 — or \$600, if you opt for the

hardware base station. The next issue is network printing. AirPort networks cannot wirelessly connect to Ethernet network laser printers, and so far, there are no

AirPort-ready printers on the market. (You can, however, share USB printers among AirPort-

enabled computers. See "Sharing a Printer" in this article for more information.)

The last consideration is speed. At its fastest, an AirPort network runs at speeds comparable to 10Base-T, the slowest Ethernet protocol.

This may be of little concern to users who simply want to tote their new iBooks and PowerBooks from room to

room and browse the Internet, however.

The Mixed Network

Home users with both desktops and laptops looking for the freedom of AirPort but the functionality of Ethernet are not left in the dark. A combination of the two networks offers the best of both worlds.

Let's say you have two iMacs, two iBooks and an Ethernet laser printer. An ideal network might then consist of a 100Base-T Ethernet hub, an AirPort Base Station, two AirPort Cards and four standard Ethernet cables. Install the AirPort cards in your iBooks, and use the cables to connect the two iMacs, the laser printer and your AirPort Base Station to the Ethernet hub. You can then run the AirPort Administrator utility and configure the base station as a bridge to your Ethernet network.

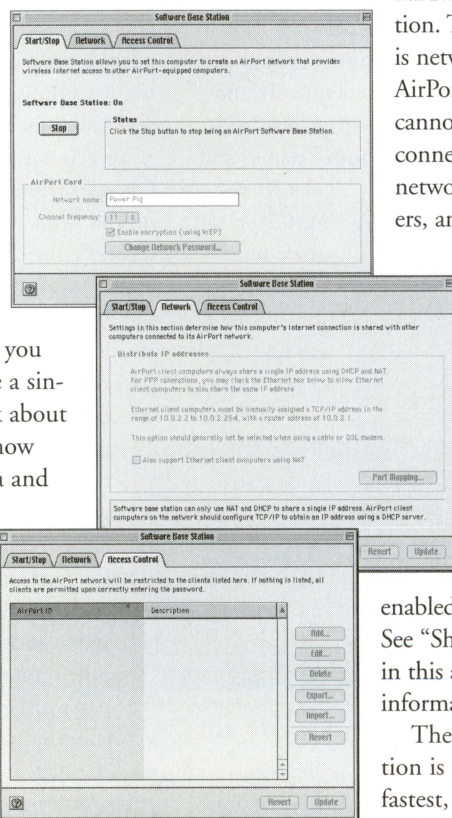
Configuring your AirPort Base Station to act as an AppleTalk bridge is a simple process. Open the AirPort Admin utility on an AirPort-enabled computer. The utility will search for any Base Stations in your area and list them in the "Select Base Station" window. Select your base station and click Configure. Now, click on the Network tab. If you are using the Distribute IP addresses feature, make sure the "Enable AirPort to Ethernet bridging" option is checked. If you are not using the Distribute IP addresses feature, the AirPort-to-Ethernet bridging is turned on by default. This lets your iBooks easily access network printers and file servers. The Ethernet hub functions as the network's primary data traffic controller.

Sharing Resources

Once you've built your network, it's time to put it to work. You can share your printers, files, and even Internet connection with the other computers on your network with just a few simple steps.

Sharing a Printer

One of the easiest devices to share among your computers is an Ethernet-equipped laser printer. Simply connect the printer to the hub and then select Chooser from the Apple menu on any networked



Cost conscious? Consider a Software Base Station instead of purchasing Apple's \$299 hardware base station.

File Sharing Over TCP/IP

Mac OS 9 allows users with a static IP address to share files across the network without the use of AppleTalk. Open the File Sharing control panel on an Ethernet-connected computer and check off the option to "Enable File Sharing clients to connect over TCP/IP." The computer's IP address is the same address that appears in the TCP/IP control panel. Close the window, and move on to the AirPort-enabled computer. Open the Chooser, and click the AppleShare icon. Now, click the Connect to Server button, input the server's IP address, and click Connect. You're then presented with a standard login window, and you can access the computer normally.

Macintosh. Click the LaserWriter 8 icon, and a list of available network printers should appear at the right. Double-click the printer name to run the setup utility, and then close the Chooser window. You'll be prompted to change the Page Setup.

Once you're done, you can select Print from the File menu in any application to print a document. (If no printer appears in the Chooser after clicking the LaserWriter 8 icon, open the AppleTalk control panel and ensure that you have selected Ethernet from the pop-up menu for Ethernet-connected computers and AirPort from the pop-up menu for AirPort-connected Macs.)

Mac OS 9 provides an easy way to share USB printers over the network.

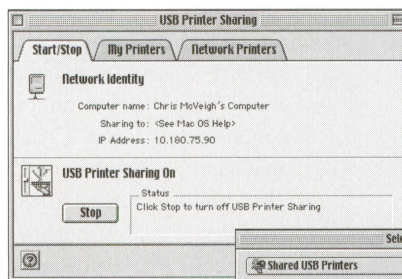
In this example, let's say you want to share your Epson Stylus Color 777. The first chore is to install the Stylus 777 printer drivers on each network computer. Now, you must decide what computer will function as the print host. Ideally, you want to choose a desktop system so that you do not sacrifice the mobility of a portable. Connect the printer to the

computer of your choice, turn it on, and open the USB Printer Sharing control panel. Click Start to initiate printer sharing and then click on the My Printers tab. The Stylus 777 should appear in the listing. Check off the box to the left of the printer name to share the Stylus 777. Now move to another networked computer. Open its USB Printer Sharing control panel and click Start to initiate printer sharing. Now click the Network Printers tab, and click the Add button in the lower right corner. A new window appears, listing available networks. Double-click Local Network, and then double-click Local Services. The shared printer will appear in the next listing. Click once to highlight the printer name, and then click Choose in the lower right corner. Now you can select the printer from the Chooser just as if it were directly connected to the networked computer!

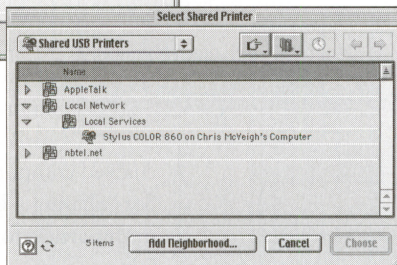
Sharing Files

Sharing files across your network can help you distribute documents, applications and software updates quickly and easily. Go to one of your Macintoshes, open the File Sharing control panel, and

click on the Start/Stop tab at the top. The first section of the window allows you to



Apple's USB Printer Sharing control panel allows you to share your USB printer with any other Macintosh on your network.



set your network identity preferences. Input your Owner Name (usually your first and last name), Password, and the Computer Name (whatever it is that you might like to call your computer). It is possible some of these values may be in place if you used Mac OS Setup Assistant when you first unboxed your Macintosh. You're not stuck with your

original entries, however. Feel free to make changes to these items as you like.

The next task is to initiate file sharing. The second section of the File Sharing control panel notes your current file sharing status. At the moment, it most likely says "File Sharing off." Simply click the Start button to get things rolling. It may take a few minutes for file sharing to get going the first time you start things up, so please be patient. Once the button changes to "Stop," close the File Sharing control panel and go back to the Finder.

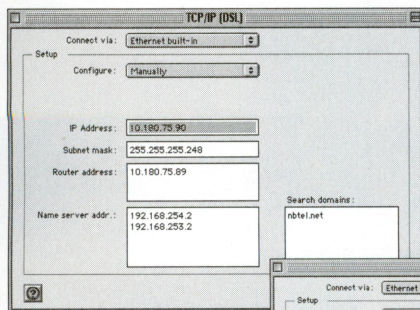
Security isn't likely to be an issue in a small home network, and so we'll keep this example simple. Under normal circumstances, you'll want to share your entire hard drive. To do this, click once on your hard drive icon, and select Get Info>Sharing... from the File menu. All you need to do now is check off the option to "Share this item and its contents" and close the window. Once you've finished up, complete the same procedure on the other Macintosh, giving it a unique Owner Name, Password and Computer Name.

To access the other Macintosh, select Chooser from the Apple Menu and click on the AppleTalk icon. The name of the second computer should immediately appear to the right (If it does not, open the AppleTalk control panel and ensure you have selected Ethernet from the pop-up menu for Ethernet-connected computers and AirPort from the pop-up menu for AirPort-connected computers. If you're using a software base station, please see the sidebar "Sharing File via TCP/IP" for more information.) Double-click on the computer name to access to login window. Enter the other computer's Owner Name and password exactly as you first entered

it (including proper capitalization), and click Connect. Another window will appear asking you to select the volume you want to access. Highlight the item listed (the other computer's hard drive) and click OK. In a few seconds, the hard drive of the other Macintosh will appear on your desktop. You can now move files to it just as easily as you move files around your own computer!

Sharing Your Internet Connection

One of the best reasons to build a home network is to share a single Internet connection among your computers. There are three ways you can serve a single Internet connection over your network. The method that you require depends upon whether your Internet Service Provider (ISP) assigns static or dynamic network addresses.



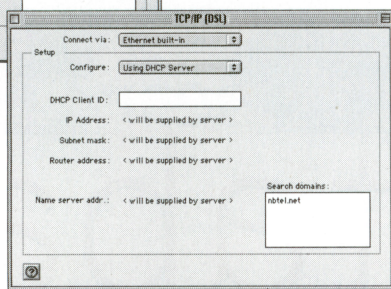
Every computer connected to the Internet must be assigned an Internet Protocol (IP) address. Some providers of DSL and Cable services assign a static IP address to each customer. This means that the computer you use to connect to the Internet has a specific, unchanging address. Other providers of DSL and Cable services use a protocol called DHCP (Dynamic Host Configuration Protocol) to assign your computer a unique address as required. The address is subject to change, however. Standard modem connections use the Point-to-Point Protocol (PPP) to link your computer to the Internet, which assigns your computer a dynamic address each time you connect.

You can check your current setup by opening your TCP/IP control panel. Look for the Configure pop-up menu. If Manual is selected and a specific IP Address appears below, you've got a static IP. If "Using DHCP Server" or "Using PPP Server" is selected, you've got a dynamic IP. If you are unsure, you should contact your ISP.

The simplest way to share an Internet connection across an Ethernet network is by assigning a unique IP address to each computer. If your Internet Service

Provider uses a static IP addressing system, call them up and find out if you can have an additional address for each computer. In many cases, the ISP will charge a nominal fee for each additional address assigned to you.

Connect your DSL/Cable modem to the uplink port of your Ethernet hub with a standard network cable. Open the TCP/IP control panel on each connected computer and fill out the form with the information provided by your ISP. In most cases, the only thing that should vary from computer to computer is the actual IP address. Once the information has been entered and saved, you should be able to surf from every computer on your network, and all at the same time.



The TCP/IP control panel reveals whether or not your current Internet connection uses a static or dynamic IP address.

connect the AirPort modem to a telephone jack. Now, using the AirPort Admin utility, you can set up the hardware base station as a DHCP server. Client computers should run the AirPort Setup assistant to make the first connection to the base station. In moments, each computer should be surfing wirelessly.

Certain service providers may not support Internet over AirPort if the hardware base station is acting as a DHCP server. The hardware base station can also distribute static IP addresses to each client, however, so you can share your connection if your service provider offers multiple addresses.

In the event your service provider is using a dynamic IP addressing system, you'll need to turn to third-party software to share your Internet connection over the network. One such software package is SurfDoubler (\$35, Vicomsoft, www.vicomsoft.com). You must first choose a host computer and make sure it is properly configured to access the

Internet. Connect your DSL/Cable modem to the uplink port of your Ethernet hub, or for a modem connection, simply ensure the host's modem is plugged into a nearby telephone jack. Once you install Surf Doubler, a setup assistant will automatically configure the software. In order to access the Internet from other computers on your network, you'll need to set the TCP/IP preferences of each machine. Open the TCP/IP control panel, select Ethernet from the Connect pop-up menu, and then select "Use DHCP Server" from the Configure pop-up menu. Close the window, save your changes, and you can surf from any computer in the house.

SurfDoubler is not for the faint of heart, however. It has trouble integrating with AirPort networks, and if the setup assistant incorrectly configures your network, you might end up spending a lot of time calling Vicomsoft's technical support line.

The Working Net

Building your own home network may seem a daunting task. It requires careful thought, smart planning and some important learning. Once you've strung your computers together, however, you'll soon wonder how you ever got along without a network. **MH**

Printing over TCP/IP

Many modern laser printers can be assigned a static IP address, much like a computer. This allows the printer to be addressed by any computer on the network (including computers within a DSL network) without the use of AppleTalk. The first step is to use the utility software that came with your laser printer to assign the device its own IP address. Next, you'll need to launch Apple's Desktop Printer Utility and create an LPR Desktop Printer. Full instructions are available in Mac OS 9's Help Center (search for "Selecting a Printer").

The Power of a

By Sandy Brundage



Database

How to Build a Database that Can Rewrite History

This is the story of Edward Murdock's wife and his six-year old son, who received a telegram in 1945 that read, "Husband killed. Confirming letter to follow." Only the details never came. It's the story of tankers burning off the shores of Florida and torpedoes slinking through lethal Mediterranean seas. And it's also the story of a database powered by Macs.

"Edward Murdock's wife requested her husband's insurance benefits in 1988, right after we finally won the court battle to get the mariners recognized as veterans," Dan Horodysky, who chronicles merchant marine history, remembers. "His son Ron contacted us after the government said it had no record of his service. We collected all the phone numbers for the national archives, created a web page with Murdock's photo and a photo of his gravestone in Italy, then called the heads of the archives asking them to please take a look. In less than a week his family got a two-inch thick pile of records. It's so gratifying, to help people like this." Tracking millions of mariners through sixty-five years of history sounds like a tremendous amount of work, and it is. But the story demonstrates how useful a solid database, or information organizer, can be. A database is like the yellow pages, but far more flexible when constructed with care.

Two Macs, 200 Books, and Millions of Records

Dan, a former mariner who caught smoking cannon shells and swam under burning water while serving in World War II, and Toni, his wife, run United States Maritime Service Veterans. The organization is devoted to completing a database that helps people like Ron Murdock. The database is critical to chronicling the true history behind the mariners, researching casualty rates and Distinguished Service medal recipients, for example. Their Website (www.usmm.org) has over 385 main pages, with thousands of subpages. Its Shipmate Search is generated with the database software Panorama (ProVue, www.provue.com, \$299) and two beige G3 Macs. Generating a list of ships, for instance, is all in a day's work for the Horodyskys, even if that list is 160 pages long. Toni, the "Web goddess" of the pair, said, "It's a mental challenge just remembering which one of our 200 books might have the right information."

Mac users since 1985, the couple visited an IBM store while shopping for their first computer, but left when the clerk couldn't figure out how to turn the machine on and then couldn't open a word processing document. It's been Apple ever since.

"After 15 years, who wants to crack open an instruction manual?" Toni said. "After all this time everything on the Mac still makes sense."

Building Your Own Database

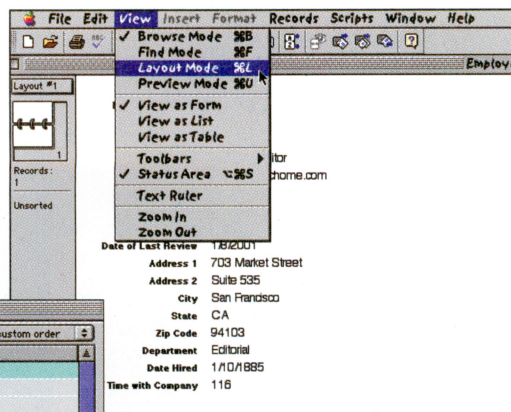
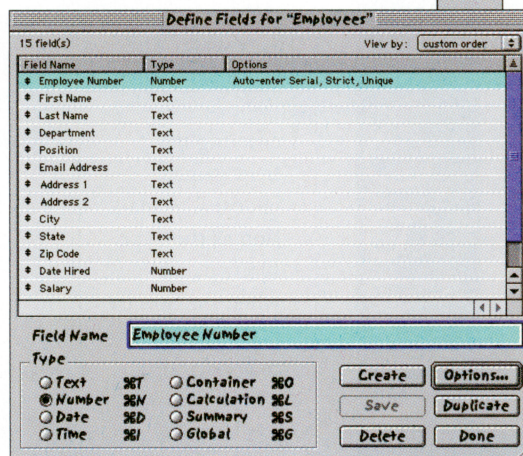
The building blocks of the database are fields; a field is a piece of data about a given entity, like the birth date of a mariner, for example. A collection of fields about that mariner is called an array in Panorama or record in FileMaker Pro, another popular database program (www.filemaker.com, \$249.) Finally, files are a group of arrays or records related to a specific topic. The records of sailors stationed on the same tanker would form a file.

Information is only useful when you can find it, as Toni said. Whether you're trying to find one particular photo of your daughter or sending an inventory list to a customer — or even locating missing mariners — the basic steps to constructing a useful database are the same. The first step doesn't even involve the computer. Plan ahead. What type of information do you need to store — numbers, text? What questions do you need the database to answer, and how do you want to search it? For example, if it's organized by name, like an address book, how will you differentiate between two customers named Joe Brown? Perhaps by mailing address? Or by assigning a unique id number to each record?

Looking for a Relationship?

Next, figure out if you need a flat-file or a relational database. A flat-file database is a bit simpler but not as powerful; each record exists in its own independent universe. This is fine for projects like creating a database of photos. A relational database, on the other hand, stores information in tables that are linked in several different ways. A site like Amazon.com (www.amazon.com) uses a relational database so visitors can search by title, genre, and media, for example, while that structure also

makes updating customer records a snap. If a customer had placed 100 orders and then their address changed, a flat-file database would require updating each



The first step in creating a database is to decide how to organize your information. A few minutes of planning can save you hours of work.

order individually. But a relational database makes the changes instantly.

Step by Step

Now we're going to walk through creating an employee directory as a flat-file database using FileMaker Pro 5 (if you don't have FileMaker 5, download a 30-day trial version at www.filemaker.com). Keep in mind that the basic steps apply to any type of database you want to build, whether it's an employee directory or a compilation of service records for all merchant marine ships.

The first step is to decide what data to include. For our example, we probably want first name, last name, department, position, work phone number, home phone number, email address, and mailing address. A mailing address is actually five fields — address 1, address 2, city, state, and zip code. Fields for date hired, date of last performance review, and salary are also useful. We'll use date hired to calculate another field, the total number of years at the company. Finally, each record will get a unique serial number to avoid mix-ups if two people have the same name. That gives us 15 fields total.

Open FileMaker after you've installed it. Now create a new file by selecting New Database from the File pulldown

menu. You'll see a Define Fields window pop up. Enter Employee Number as the Field Name. Next, select Options at the bottom right of the window. In the new pop-up, with the Auto-Enter tab at front, check the box next to Serial Number. To make sure that no one accidentally changes that number, also check Prohibit Modification of Value. Now click the Validation tab. Select Unique, then Strict. These steps tell the program to give each new record one new, unique serial number. Click Ok. You'll return to Define Fields. All that's left to do is to select what Type of data the field will contain; the choices are listed in the bottom left of the window. Since a serial number will be auto-entered in this field, choose the button for Number. Click Create. The new field is now listed in the top of the window.

Repeat these steps for each field we decided to include: First Name (text), Last Name (text), Position (text), and so on. Be careful with a phone number field — if you define its Type as Number, don't enter parentheses when it's time to enter the actual number in the database! Date Hired should be Type Date. Use Text for each of the Mailing Address fields, even zip codes. That way if you decide to perform a numerical analysis on the database, the zip codes won't mess up the calculations.

To set up the Total Time with Company field requires a few extra, but simple, steps. After



Back Up Your Mac! This month on MacHome.com look for a special feature about backing up. We know that less than half of you back up regularly because you admitted as much in our recent subscriber study.

In Back Up Your Mac! we'll share our **Top 10 Tips** for backing up. We'll also discuss the different Back Up Solutions available - how to back up to a Jaz drive, a CD-R drive, or even to the Internet.

Losing photo albums, music libraries, financial information, address books, among other data, can be devastating. The old adage, "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" is very appropriate to backing up your computer. Don't miss this special feature!

Classroom

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- Where to find the best metric system conversion software
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HotTips

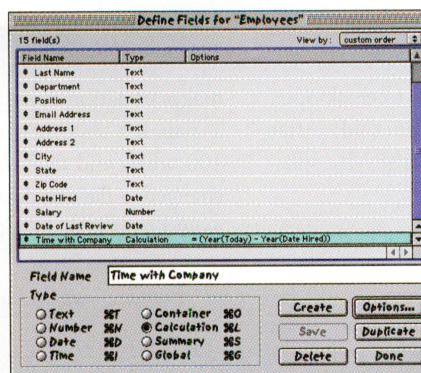
Recent tips and tricks found only in HotTips last month include:

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Coming Up In and Around MacHome



Take advantage of the calculation functions to automatically analyze your data.

entering the field name, choose Calculation as the Type. Don't panic when the Specify Calculation window pops up, with its arcane symbols. All we want to do is compute the

number of years between the current date and the hiring date, right? So click Year in the list to the upper right of the window. Add an open parentheses and select Today. Close the parentheses. Now click the minus sign. Choose Year again, and this time put Date Hired, from the list of defined fields on the left, between parentheses. You'll see the equation "Time with Company = Year(Today) - Year(Date Hired)" appear. Hit Done, and the equation is ready!

Once all the fields are defined, look over the list to see if the fields are ordered to your liking. To move one, slide the cursor over the triangles to the left of the field you want to move. Hold down the mouse button and drag the field to its new position, then let go of the button. The pulldown menu to the upper right offers other ordering options.

All that just to set up the "base" part of the database! Now it's time to actually enter the data. Click Done. Now you'll see the Records area of your new database, with each field ready and waiting for information. Enter the first employee's data. You might notice that some fields aren't long enough — only part of the email address is visible, for example. This looks messy and makes it hard to skim through records. To fix it, pull down the View menu and select Layout Mode. This lets you resize boxes by dragging one of its corners, change fonts, all of the graphical tricks you use with a word processor like AppleWorks or Microsoft Word. Choose Browse Mode to get back to the records.

Congratulations — you just built a database. Explore FileMaker Pro's functions to see how you can adapt the program to another project, even one as large as the U.S. Maritime Veterans' Shipmate Search. Most programs, including FileMaker Pro and Panorama, have templates to get common databases like our employee directory up and running in a couple minutes. There's no question that the power of a database is something everyone needs. **MH**



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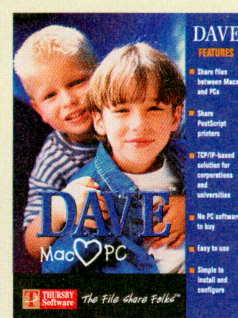
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Computers Wanted for Good Home

Get More than You Give

Apple has delicious hardware out like the 733MHz G4, and even those of us who love our beige boxes might be eyeing an upgrade to take advantage of FireWire and programs like iDVD. **But what do you do with the old computer, assuming it's too big to be a doorstep?**

By Sandy Brundage

There's always selling, of course. Auction site eBay (www.ebay.com) does a brisk business in Macs. You'll need to build up your reputation as a trustworthy seller first before auctioning off a computer if you want to get a good price; see "An Introduction to Online Auctions: Part II" (*MacHome* March 2001) for tips on earning creditability. MacHost (<http://recycle.machost.com/>), another trade site, runs a recycling section that lets you post free "For Sale" or "Wanted" notices.

Selling isn't the only option, though, and it's not even the only one that can make you money. Donating computers to a school or non-profit group could equal an income tax deduction. Most recycling organizations will give you an itemized receipt showing the value of the equipment you've donated. Save that receipt until tax time to see if you qualify for a deduction. Even if you don't, there's nothing quite like knowing you've helped someone step into the world of computers when they otherwise couldn't afford to.

Access 2 Technology

For nine years Access 2 Technology (www.a2t.org; 510-879-2136) has placed computers in all sorts of homes, from an elder abuse counseling program to elementary and middle schools. Two years ago when California's East Bay Symphony needed a Mac's graphical design finesse, A2T took the one Power Mac on its front desk and gave it to the symphony office. The office is still using it today.

But the computers aren't simply collected and passed along. The non-profit organization sticks to the philosophy of teaching people how to fish instead of simply giving them a fish. Its programs require people, particularly students, to participate in the process of rebuilding the computers they receive.

"We strive to make technology education understandable and accessible to the students we are working with," director Renae Briggs said. "We do this by involving our students in the refurbishing process from start to finish. They

apply math, science, problem solving, and critical thinking skills to complete their computer system.” Students learn how computers work and how to perform routine maintenance like keeping a keyboard and mouse clean, upgrading RAM, testing and changing a PRAM battery, cleaning a floppy drive, formatting and installing a new hard drive, and running utility software. Eventually the Macs go on to teach other new users the same tricks.

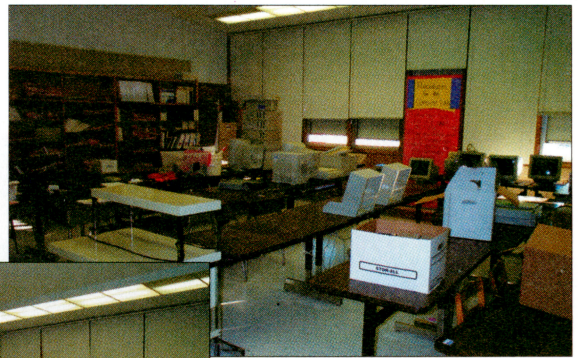
New owners attend classes and workshops that teach everything from basic science and math concepts to diagnosing sad Mac symptoms. The impact of the lessons extends far beyond the classroom. Renae said, “The joy of being a teacher is seeing each of our students take on some challenge to overcome or some goal to achieve. For one student, working on the computers turned him from a kid that teachers really didn’t like, into a kid that teachers really started to depend upon for tech support.” A2T has found that students frustrated in a traditional classroom often learn basic concepts like math, science, and language better in a hands-on environment, which is made possible by the donated Macs.

Sound like a plan you can agree with? A2T will take your tired, your obsolete, your poor — ok, maybe not poor — computer and polish your Apple until it shines. “We’re not really worrying about what kinds of computers come through the door,” Renae said.

Apples for Teachers

MacTreasures (www.mactreasures.com) matches donors with schools. Carole Holcomb explained, “Our role in this program is solely to provide a listing to the donators, of schools around them that are interested in receiving donations. We request that the donor be sure that all donated equipment be in good working order. If a computer is being donated, the drive should be clear, except for the operating system and related software. If software is included with the donation, all licenses, manuals, original disks/CDs, should be included.

All logistics are to be worked out between the donor and the school, such as shipping costs, or arranging pick up if the donor is close.”



Before and After: A2T transformed a school’s desolate computer lab (above) into one filled with rows of Macs rebuilt from the ground up by students (left).

To participate in the MacTreasures Donor Program, send a list of Macintosh equipment you wish to donate and contact information to caroleh@mactreasures.com. “We are never even with this program. In other words, we have donors in areas without schools and schools in areas without donors,” she said. To add a local school to the list, tell Carole about the school and its current computer equipment, and what it’s looking for.

Steve Tryon of Black & White used MacTreasures after trying for several months to find a public school that would accept the company’s computers. “We had refurbished all the systems and cleaned them thoroughly; it came as a big disappointment having no one want almost new equipment. It took one phone call to Carole and we got our first request. It was a school for troubled teens in Lake Tahoe. “

Tripping over Disks?

What about all those floppies lying around your desk, dusty, dog-chewed, and abandoned in favor of CDs? There’s a place for them, too. Check out Floppies for Kids (www.floppiesforkids.org). It serves as a collection point for 3.5” disks. There’s no minimum or maximum number of disks they’ll take (although they ask that if you’re sending

10,000 at once to please let them know ahead of time.)

Once donated, the disks are wiped clean, counted, and shipped to non-profit organizations or schools that need them. The project can give you an estimate of how much your donated disks were worth, so you can write off the donation at tax time.

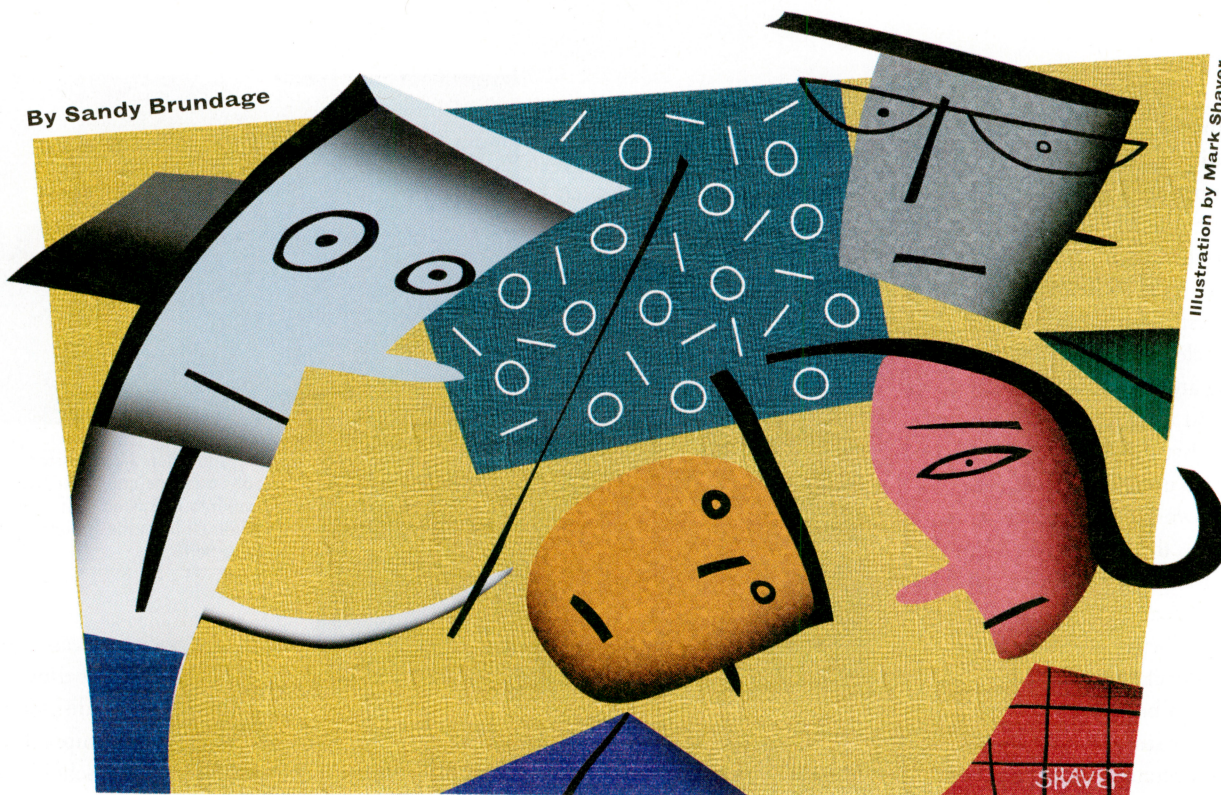
Not Just for Kids

Students aren’t the only ones who appreciate computers. Nursing homes and hospices make good computer retirement homes for Macs adjusted with a little tender loving care. Mac SwapMeet (www.macswapmeet.com) suggests fixing up an old Mac for elderly folks by taking advantage of Apple’s trademark customizability to increase the font to an easy-on-the-eyes size before you donate it. By going to the Appearance control panel and clicking the Fonts tab, you’ll be able to make text on the screen look like that in those large print books in the library.

So next time upgrade fever strikes, take a few minutes to see if you have Mac equipment or disks hiding behind the dust bunnies. Sure, you might need another doorstop, but why not put a new spark of life into an old computer by sending it to a loving home? And take a cue from A2T — once your computer passes on, spend a little time showing the new owner around the system. You just might win over another heart to the Macintosh cause. **MH**

By Sandy Brundage

Illustration by Mark Shaver



Going the Distance

Learning Online

Dedicated to opening a window on MIT, the famous university has launched OpenCourseWare, a multimillion-dollar venture to put lectures and assignments from over 2,000 courses online with free access for anyone. It's not typical distance education — there's no interaction between professors and students, for example — but having one of the world's greatest schools at your fingertips is a hard deal to beat. And it might give you a taste for the real thing. So sit back and relax; we're taking a look at the ABCs of getting a higher education online, from finding classes to whipping up superior study habits.

Stan Cahill, senior director of strategy and business development for the PBS Adult Learning Service (and a “Mac person deep inside my soul”), said that the half-million students taking its courses each year are older people juggling jobs, families, and the dream of a college degree. “They are truly adult learners, people who either didn't get to go to college or had to stop for some reason. There are also people who are re-entering the work force,

who want to improve their skills and salary by earning a degree.”

For 20 years, PBS (www.pbs.org/als) has created courses taught by video or over the web. Students can visit a local campus to watch a video, tune in to PBS on DirecTV, or enroll in a Web-only class like Internet Literacy. Core courses like Sociological Imagination (an introduction to psychology) and English Composition are the most popular.

Extending your education in a virtual classroom has several advantages over traditional classes: flexibility in class schedules lets you keep your day job and meet family responsibilities; technologies like chat rooms and interactive videos customize a program to suit your learning style; and a broad variety of courses, from law to fabric origami, lets you truly pursue a passion without worrying about whether or not a class is taught at a particular university. Choose a program that gives you credit towards a college degree, or programs like Management 101 that get you credit on the job for learning new work skills.

Earning a degree online may even be cheaper than attending

a local school; use the Distance Learning Calculator for Prospective Students (<http://sln.suny.edu/admin/sln/original.nsf>) to compare costs. There are a lot of courses online, like the automotive mechanics workshops at Berkeley, that won't cost anything at all.

School Supplies

Typing "distance education" into a search engine opens the door to a bewildering number of programs. To weed out diploma mills and scammers, only consider schools that are accredited by one of six regional accreditation councils and also have Distance Education and Training Credentials (DETC). Accreditation means that the school has voluntarily submitted its programs for review by an evaluation council, which makes sure that minimum standards are met. That information should be listed on the school's Website. If it's not, don't sign up.

A few sites have already done the weeding for you — MindEdge (www.mindedge.com) sports a list of legit schools; Hungry Minds (www.hungrymindsuniversity.com), which publishes *Cliffs Notes* and *For Dummies* books, offers courses, many for free in all subjects, in association with Berkeley and UCLA. An online course demo is also available. Finally, Degree.net (www.degree.net) keeps an updated directory of 100 accredited schools. The Kaplan Colleges (www.kaplancollege.com) are great examples of solid distance education programs, offering degrees in everything from business management to law.

The detective work should go a bit farther after you've found an accredited program with courses you like. Check with the Better Business Bureau (www.bbb.org) to see if the school is a member or has had complaints filed against it. Finally, call the administration, and see if the staff is helpful and available. Do you always get an answering machine? Is the only mailing address a P.O. box? Then look elsewhere. With so many legitimate options available it won't be a problem to find another university. Take your time selecting a program for enrollment. Read the syllabus, email the

instructors, and ask other students about classes. Try a single course on for size before jumping into a full degree program.

The next step is to see what tools you'll need to take the class. A computer with an Inter-

net connection is the minimum. Other courses, like one-way live video classes, might mean you'll have to find a school nearby to watch at if the shows are broadcast on a private channel. Chat rooms, search engines, and email are the school supplies of choice for distance education. So before class starts, play with search engines like Dogpile (www.dogpile.com) and Google (www.google.com) to learn how to enter effective queries and sift through the results, since you'll probably have to use the Web for class project research. And practice using chat programs like ICQ (www.icq.com) so you'll be ready to talk when the teacher is. Expect to buy the usual school supplies, too, such as textbooks.

Financial aid options are within reach of online students pursuing college degrees. The same programs that help people attend traditional campuses, like Sallie Mae Educational Loans (www.salliemae.com), can ease the money crunch of getting a degree at a distance. If the course you're taking will add a shine to your job skills, then ask at work to see if it qualifies for an employee tuition reimbursement program.

It's All About You

The next step on the road to lifelong learning is to decide whether or not dis-

Whether your goal is a new hobby or a degree, there's a course online that will help you reach it.

tance education is for you. It might cost less in terms of money, but not time — expect to spend two hours studying for each course credit, about what you'd spend for an on-campus class. It also requires more self-discipline. Never will washing the cat and cleaning the grill seem so appealing as when it's time to study for an out-of-sight, out-of-touch teacher. Tell family and friends what you're doing, asking that they respect your study time. Turning a corner into your own classroom at home will help everyone get in the school-time frame of mind.

The distance also places a greater responsibility on the student to tell teachers when the lesson doesn't make sense, since they can't see you looking confused. A long-distance class demands more effort than just watching TV, even if the class is taught by video or Web. But you also get the flexibility of studying at your own pace.

On the Other Side of the Blackboard

Not only can students find teachers online, but teachers can find students. Apple's own Learning Interchange (<http://ali.apple.com/ali/>) has sections devoted to distance education from a teacher's perspective. Units of Practice, for example, helps teachers find Web materials to incorporate into a class that they select by subject and grade level.

The bottom line is that if you want to stretch your mind, go online. Its variety, flexibility and technology make distance education an option anyone should consider. You don't have to go to the university — the university can come to you. **MH**

Send a Personalized iCard

Did you know you can personalize Apple's iCards with a favorite photo? It's surprisingly easy to insert a digital camera image into a standard iCard. The first task is to sign up for an iTools account, if you haven't already done so. Go to www.apple.com, click the iTools tab at the top, and then follow the signup procedure to get started.

Once you're ready to roll, you must mount your iDisk. Return to Apple's site and click on the iTools tab. You are then presented with five options: iCards, Email, HomePage, iDisk, and Kidsafe. Click the iDisk icon. After the login page loads, type your member name and password, and then click Enter. At the iDisk options page, click the top right button to "Open Your iDisk." In a few moments, your iDisk will mount on your desktop. Switch back to the Finder, and double-click the iDisk icon to view its contents. The top right icon will be titled Pictures. Simply drag all your favorite images to that folder and wait for the files to copy. (Your photos must be saved in the JPEG image format, usually denoted with the ".jpg" suffix at the end of the file name. Most digital cameras save images in JPEG format by default.)

Now, return to your Web browser, and click iCards at the top left of the purple iTools menu. Once the iCards page loads, click the option to Create Your Own in the lower right. You're then presented with a list of images available in your iDisk Picture folder. Select the image you want on the iCard, and click Preview. Once the image appears at the right, click Select This Image to continue. On the next page, select a font and type in your message. Click Continue, enter a recipient address, click Add Recipient, and then click Send Your Card. Your personalized message will be whisked around the globe (or down the road, to your grandmother's house) in the blink of an eye!

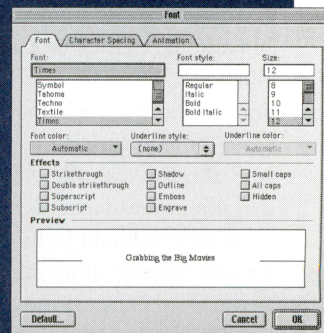


Grabbing the Big Movies

QuickTime 4 and 5 have a setting for Internet connection speed that will occasionally prevent you from obtaining high-quality content. Consider many of the movie trailers found at www.apple.com/quicktime. Apple's site automatically detects the connection speed specified in the QuickTime settings control panel, which by default is set to 28.8/33.6K. As a result, the Apple server will send you a small movie with a low frame rate and poor quality audio. To grab the larger size trailers, you must change your speed setting. Go to the QuickTime control panel and select Connection Speed from the pop-up menu. Click on Intranet/LAN to ensure you are sent the highest quality content. It takes a lot longer to download these larger files with a standard modem, however, so before you change the speed setting make sure you are comfortable with the extra wait.

Microsoft Word's Default Font

Although Times Roman is a venerable typeface, it's terribly overused. Many of you probably have another font you prefer for printed documents. It's thus somewhat agitating that Microsoft Word insists on starting a new document with Times Roman. You must select your preferred typeface from the font menu before you



begin writing, and over time, this becomes tedious. The good news is that you can easily change Microsoft Word's default font. Select Font from the Format menu. A window appears, allowing you to change the font style to anything you like. To make your currently selected font the default typeface, simply click Default in the lower left corner. An alert window pops up, asking you to confirm the change. Click Yes and continue your work.

Did you know...

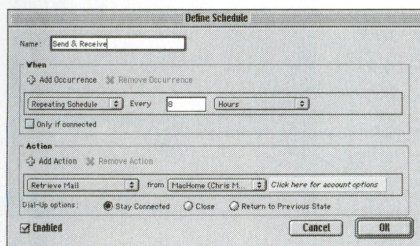
There are more than **18,000 products for your Macintosh?** Find them all at Apple's Macintosh Products Guide Website:
<http://guide.apple.com/usindex.html>

Auto Reply During Vacation

Every once in a while, we all need a vacation. If you don't mind leaving your Mac on, Mac OS 9 and Outlook Express can notify people that you're out.

The first task is to set the Energy Saver preferences so that your computer conserves electricity. Open the Energy Saver control panel, and click Sleep Setup. A **new** button called Show Details appears in the bottom right. Click this button to reveal individual settings for display and hard drive sleep. Now, check both options, and pull each slider to the far left. Move back up to the original sleep preference slider, and pull its slider all the way to the right. This ensures that the computer itself never actually sleeps — just the display and hard drive. Close the window.

Launch Outlook Express, and select Rules from the Tools menu. Click New in the window that appears to define your new mail rule. Give your rule a descriptive name, such as "Vacation Reply." Make sure the pop-up menu in the If box is set to All messages. Skip to the Then box and select Reply from the pop-up menu. Click the Reply Text button at the left, and type



in your away message. Click OK, and return to Outlook Express' main window.

Finally, specify a schedule for sending and receiving email. Select Schedules from the Outlook Express Tools menu. Double-click Send & Receive All in the window that appears. In the Define Schedule window, select Repeating Schedule from the pop-up menu in the topmost box. Since the computer will remain on, select Hours from the pop-up menu at the right, and enter 8 in the adjacent text box.

With a standard dial-up connection to the Internet, the computer must initiate a connection by itself. In the Remote Access control panel, click the Options button at the bottom to open a new window. In the Protocol tab, check the first option listed to ensure your computer "Connects automatically when starting TCP/IP connections." In the Connection tab, click "Disconnects if idle for 10 minutes."

Mac OS Update Watch

Mac OS X 10.0.2

Apple has released a maintenance update to Mac OS X. The update provides improved application stability, additional Classic compatibility and better support for third-party USB devices. The update requires Mac OS X and can be found with the Software Update system preference. (4MB).

Software Update 1.3.1

This minor update to Mac OS X's Software Update control panels includes several small bug fixes and allows Mac OS X systems to automatically download the Mac OS 10.0.2 Update. The update requires Mac OS X and can be found with the Software Update system preference. (660k).

AppleScript Update 1.6

Apple's latest update to AppleScript provides addition support for Mac OS X. You can now create scripts within Mac OS X and use scripts within Mac OS X's Classic environment. The update requires Mac OS 9.1 and can be found at <http://asu.info.apple.com/swupdates.nsf/artnum/n12091> (2MB).

GeForce 2 MX Update

This update fixes several software compatibility issues and install new firmware onto the GeForce2 MX graphics card found in the latest Power Macintosh G4 systems. The update can be found at <http://asu.info.apple.com/swupdates.nsf/artnum/n12073> and requires Mac OS 9.1 and a GeForce2 MX graphics card (2MB).

MacHome Quiz

Whether you've forgotten more about the Mac than most people know or you're new to the computer, it's fun to test your memory. Here are some questions that will leave you with a few more tricks up your sleeve. And if you have quiz questions for us, stump us at letters@machome.com!

1. In Mac OS X, how do you connect to a printer?
2. What does USB stand for?
3. How can you make a Mac behave like a FireWire hard disk?
4. What are two ways to Shut Down in Mac OS X?
5. How thick is the new iBook?
6. What is a VCD?
7. What kind of cable is needed to directly connect two Macs?
8. What's the difference between ROM and RAM?
9. What's the cheapest way to improve your system performance?
10. How can you cancel most dialogue boxes and actions?

Answers on page 53

Subscription Questions?

Do you have questions or problems with your subscription? Please call us at 800.800.6542 or email us at

mhjr@mail.kable.com

Make a Video CD



The SuperDrive, available in the PowerMac G4 and externally from third parties like LaCie, can burn DVDs that will play on your home DVD player.

But without a new computer or a costly DVD recorder, you can make

Video CDs on a CD burner instead.

Video CDs are popular in Asia, but they never caught on in America. Even though you may have never heard of them, you probably already have several Video CD players. With some shareware, your computer will play Video CDs. And most home DVD players will also present VCDs; just play one like you would a typical DVD.

By Zack Stern

Creating a Video CD for a home DVD player is a straightforward process with Toast 5 Titanium (www.roxio.com). For this workshop, you can use iMovies.

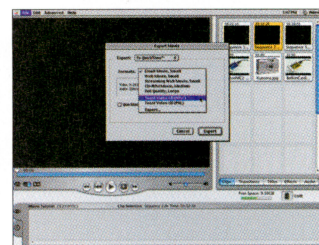
You'll also want to try this process a few times to make sure that your DVD player will work with your burned CDs. Because the reflective backing on CD-Rs and CD-RWs differs, try creating several discs with the following process to see which work

best with your DVD player. Even different brands of CDs may give different results. Our best VCDs have been burned on CD-RW media.

Step 1 Gather the Video

After polishing off your video masterpiece, within iMovie choose Export Movie from the File Menu. In the Export pull-down menu, select To QuickTime. In Formats, pick Toast Video CD (NTSC).

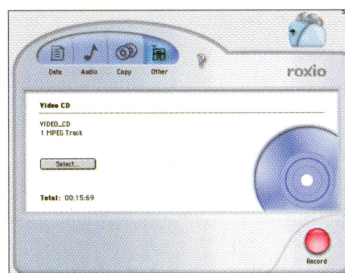
iMovie will prepare the video in a format called MPEG that your home DVD player will recognize. After exporting, Toast will automatically open and import the video track. To use several videos on a single disc, repeat this process, and when finished, you'll have a VCD with each video accessible by a chapter number.



Step 2 Burn the VCD

Click on the Burn button, insert a blank disc, and create a Video CD. Experiment with a few brands of CD-R media to see if your DVD player will recognize them; otherwise, try CD-RWs because their shiny surface more closely matches a professional VCD.

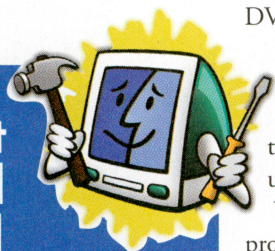
The Video CD will be able to hold about 70 minutes of video at a quality that is similar to a VHS video tape—remember those? One reason to use a Video CD over a video tape is that Video CDs are expected to last longer



than video tape; while real-world results comparing the two mediums aren't out, we do know that video tapes lose their magnetic charge over the course of many years, leaving your footage to evaporate. Video CD information is physically burned into the disc, which should mean that they will last longer than video tape. VHS tapes also wear out as you pause, fast-forward, or even play them. Video CDs don't suffer the same effect.

What You'll Need

1. A CD Burner
2. Blank CD-Rs and CD-RWs
3. iMovies
4. Toast 5 Titanium



Play Video CDs on Your Mac

MacVCD (www.mireth.com/macvcd.html)

FreeVCD (<http://www.cs.ucla.edu/~nathanst/freevcd/>)

SimpleVCD (www.kagi.com/guoniu/SimpleVCD/index.html)

VCD Player (www.johnnylee.com/)

Make a Slideshow CD

Once you figure out how to make a Video CD, you can use that concept to make a CD with your pictures. In iMovie, you can add narration and music to create a multimedia presentation.

Step 1 Import the Images

Locate your pictures to use on the CD. For best results, gather images that are 640 x 480 pixels or higher — these files will generally be about 100k or more. In iMovie, select Import File from the File menu. Highlight the images (shift-click to choose more than one), and push Open. Your pictures will now be available in the iMovie Clips window.



Step 2 Arrange the Pictures

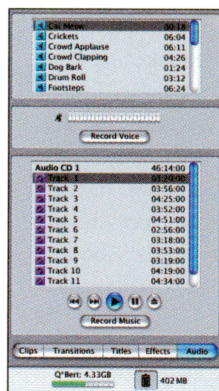
Just like editing a movie, drag the pictures to the Timeline. Position them in an appropriate order. To extend their length, click once on an image to highlight it, then type a duration just above the timeline. Remember that iMovie marks frames for the last two places of the duration; you can ignore that space for this application.

Once the pictures are in order, consider adding transitional effects by clicking on the Transitions tab. Choose one from the list, and drag it to the timeline. The Titles tab can also spice up the presentation with text.



Step 3 Add Sound

Click once on the Audio tab, and drag sound files to the Timeline. To use your own music, insert a CD, select the tracks, and push the Record Music button. Add narration with a microphone by pushing the Record Voice button. Once these items are in the timeline, you can adjust their volumes by selecting each and moving the volume slider in the lower right corner.

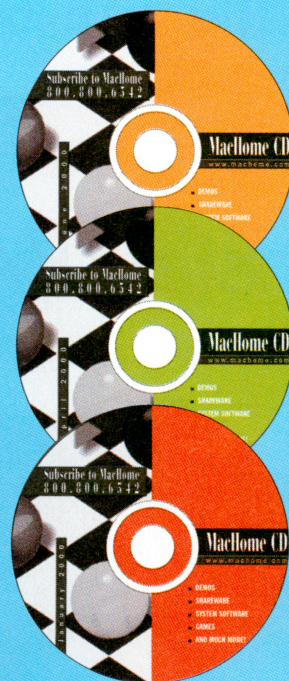


Step 4 Burn the CD

Follow the steps in the previous workshop to export your video for Toast and to burn your slideshow Video CD. Like with the video segments, if export several slideshow videos or other segments to Toast, you will create a Video CD that will let you access each item with chapters.

iMovie Help

iMovie is a powerful application even though it's a consumer package. It can get complicated at times. For help with iMovie check the Help Center (push the Help key). MacHome also has several articles to get you up to speed. See June 2001 for audio tips and April 2001 for many iMovie ideas.



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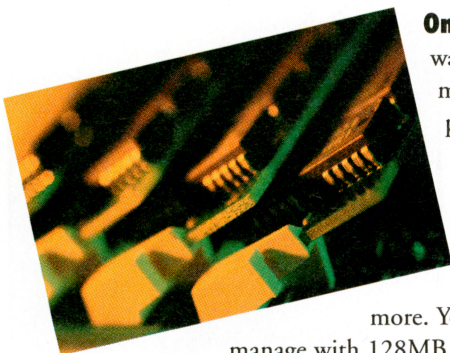
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MacHome

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Missing or broken CD? Please email our customer service department at mhjr@mail.kable.com for replacements.

Install RAM in an iMac



One of the most direct ways to get better performance from your computer is to add RAM. During typical use, the computer handles several tasks at once and works best with 192MB RAM or

more. You may be able to manage with 128MB RAM, however your speed and ability to multitask will be limited. If you frequently use video, game, graphics, or other media applications, aim for 256MB RAM or more.

If your iMac is older and doesn't have the same compartment as the following example, do take it to a repair shop for installation. Adding parts to the first revisions of the iMacs is too difficult for most consumers, requiring you to take apart much of the iMac.

Before you start, check how much RAM the iMac currently has. In the Apple Menu, select About This Computer or About This Mac to see what's inside.

Step 1 Shut Down and Disconnect

If this is your first time using the iMac, start it up to verify that it works properly

out of the box. It's important to know if you have a problem

before installing the RAM in order to take care of that before adding any other variables. Then continue with the installation.

Now Shut Down the computer. Unplug the keyboard and mouse, modem cable, and any other wires, but leave the power cord plugged in. Place a towel on your desk, and set the iMac monitor-side down on the towel. If a soft chair is large enough, you can substitute that for the towel and desk.

Step 2 Open Up

Using a large flathead screwdriver or coin, open the plastic door on the bottom of the iMac. Underneath this hatch, you can add an AirPort card for wireless networking or RAM.

Now that the computer is open, touch the metal grille on the inside of the opening to electrically ground yourself, then unplug the power cord. Remove the RAM from its static-free bag, being careful to only touch its thin top and side edges. Touching the metal edge or the chips transfers oil on your hand to the card, which could cause the RAM to fail. Also, try to stand still during the installation because you could build up static electricity walking around the room.

Step 3 Drop In

Locate a free slot. Firmly push the RAM in at a right angle to the surface of the Mac. If this is the first time you've installed RAM, you might have to push harder than you expect. With even, deliberate pressure, the RAM will slide into its slot. The metal pins should sit flush against the computer; if the RAM is angled, remove and reinsert it.

Step 4 Start Computing

Close the door, and reconnect the iMac. Turn it on, and verify that the installation worked as expected. In Mac OS 9, choose About This Computer in the Apple Menu. In Mac OS X, choose About This Mac from the Apple Menu. The new RAM should now be included in the total system count.

If the computer did not start or the RAM doesn't show up, try again. Turn off the computer, remove, then replace the RAM. If problems persist, contact the RAM retailer or visit a computer repair shop for help. **MH**

What You'll Need



1. A recent iMac
2. RAM
3. A soft towel (optional)

By Zack Stern

Step 1 Shut Down and Disconnect

If this is your first time using the iMac, start it up to verify that it works properly

out of the box. It's important to know if you have a problem

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RAM Sales

Techworks

www.techworks.com
800-688-7466

Crucial Technology

www.crucial.com
800-336-8896

Kingston Technology

www.kingston.com
800-337-8410

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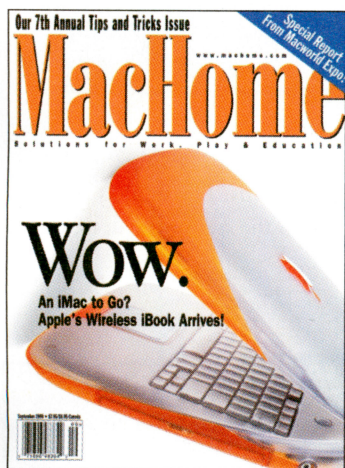
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Palm OS Handhelds

Handspring's Visor Edge vs. Palm's m500

Handspring and Palm have released handhelds that bring their two styles closer together. Handspring had previously been the king of the expansion slot, and Palm was the ruler of svelte design.

Handspring's Visor Edge and Palm's m500 are both small, stylish, expandable devices. Both include 8MB RAM and work with your Mac out of the box. But because of technical and physical difficulties with the Edge, the m500 is the more rounded of the two.

These two handhelds use the Palm OS to power their interface. You can carry contacts, notes, and small applications away from your Mac.

The Visor Edge is easily Handspring's smallest PDA yet. Previously tied down by the Springboard expansion slot's bulky size, the Edge ships without one built-in. Instead, the metal flip-cover can be removed to reveal a new slot that takes an adapter for Springboard hardware modules (like a GPS module). This adapter works even if the expansion modules take the space of half the Edge.

The Edge includes a few other features that make it an interesting competitor for the m500. The metal stylus is large and reasonably weighty, giving a deliberate feel to its design. The

screen is clear, too — more than Handspring's previous designs. A flashing LED complements the alarm.

Palm's m500 is even smaller than the Edge. Both are about the same height and width, but the m500 will slip into even smaller spots because it's shorter. The plastic and metal elements of the m500 feel more solid than the Edge even in this smaller space.

The m500 delivers its own features like a flashing LED and a vibrating alarm. Its metal stylus also feels solid.

New to a Palm handheld, the m500 incorporates an expansion slot that accepts Secure Digital or MultiMedia Cards. This slot allows RAM expansion, new ways to install and run programs, and the addition of third-party peripherals.

The Visor Edge's flaws are far more significant than the

m500's. The first Edge that was sent for review lost four screws, the tip of the stylus fell out, and it otherwise self-destructed. It crashed hard, and wasn't able to start even after restoring to factory settings. The replacement Edge had its share of crashes, and its IR port didn't function properly, although its aluminum and plastic case remained intact.

The m500's only flaw is its flip-cover. The Edge uses a hinged, metal cover to protect it. The m500's reinforced leather cover doesn't match the rest of the design, and it flops around loosely.



By Zack Stern

The Final Decision

When the Visor Edge was working, it was a competent handheld. But when it wasn't working properly, it was useless. Because the unit fell apart and crashed, it's difficult to recommend even for its clear screen and smooth design. The m500 is more refined, even if the flip-cover doesn't quite belong. Using already developed MMC and SD media makes expansion direct. Overall, the m500 is more worthy of your pocket. **MH**

rating



Visor Edge
\$399, Handspring
www.handspring.com
888-565-9393



Thin, clear screen



Crashed, IR problems, fell apart

rating



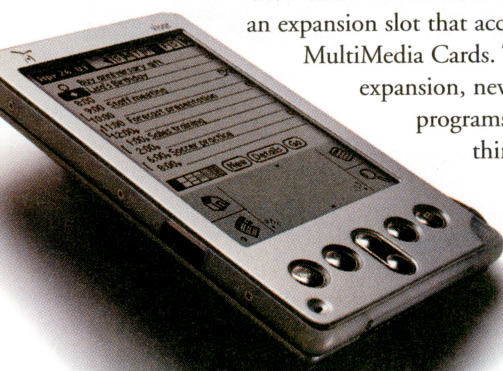
m500
\$399, Palm, Inc.
www.palm.com
800-881-7256



Small, solid, effective screen



Floppy flip-cover



LaCie PocketCD-RW

The LaCie PocketCD-RW is a versatile option that will work in nearly any situation. While you'd need some big pockets to fit this burner, it is about as small as possible. Sure it's compact enough to take on the road, but who wouldn't want a bus-powered FireWire drive connected to a desktop, too? And the addition of a USB interface will let it work with original iBooks and iMacs. In the clouded market of CD-RW drives where it's hard to tell one from another, the PocketCD-RW stands above the rest because of its size and power.

Starting with a solid foundation, the PocketCD-RW writes at 8X, rewrites at 4X, and reads at 24X. While some drives burn even faster, these numbers mean that this drive can create full CDs in about eight minutes.

The drive comes bundled with Toast 4.1.2. While Toast 5 was just released,

and it adds more burning features, this earlier software is still a capable way of creating CDs.

The PocketCD-RW allows connection via FireWire or USB. With FireWire, the bus provides enough power to run the drive — no external power cables are needed. For USB, the included power cable will get you energized for burning.

The PocketCD-RW isn't just a pretty face, although it is flashy. Only slightly larger than a CD, and about as thick as a few stacked jewel cases, this drive is small enough to take anywhere. Use it with a FireWire iBook or PowerBook to burn on a plane. A raised rubber coating around the edge gives the small drive a more substantial feel and protects it from bumps. A cool blue LED even adds an organic touch to the unit.



The Final Decision

With no problems creating discs in any test, this drive is easy to recommend. Quick burn speeds, bus-powered FireWire support, a versatile USB connection, and thoughtful design style make the PocketCD-RW a welcome addition anywhere you want to burn CDs. And with this compact drive, you could truly burn CDs anywhere you can use a Mac.

— Zack Stern

rating ★★★★★

\$399, LaCie
www.lacie.com
503-844-4502

Oh so small, quick, FireWire and USB, FireWire bus-powered

None

Matrox RTMac

If you're a Final Cut Pro user like myself, you've no doubt been eagerly waiting for Matrox's hardware accelerator to bring real-time editing capabilities to version 2.0. And after working with the PCI card for a couple of weeks, I will admit to being very impressed by what it does; it eliminates the need to render 20 specific video transitions and motion effects, provides support for an extra monitor,

and allows you to perform analog capture and export. And yet, I'm somewhat disappointed because I was expecting it to do more, such as create a real-time editing environment.

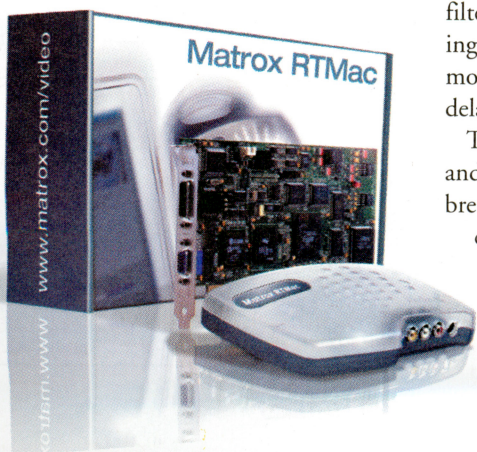
The Matrox Company's definition of "real-time" is that you can play back or record your effects onto analog tape without having to render them. This allows you to see the effects you're creating before waiting for rendering. But unless you are using one of the 20 "real-time" effects you must still wait for your effects to render. Using audio and video filters, non-real-time effects, and exporting editing sequences to the QuickTime movie format still require enormous time delays due to the R word, Rendering.

The card supports a second monitor and comes with analog input and output breakout box complete with S-Video and composite RCA connectors. This is a great option for capturing video footage from an analog camera or VCR. Once the Matrox

board has been installed in your G4, the 20 real-time transitions not requiring rendering are listed in bold on the Effects menu.

The Final Decision While this board does not put an end to rendering while using Final Cut Pro, it does give you the ability to view some commonly used effects in real time. The Matrox RTMac's ability to capture from and playback to analog sources, support for a second monitor, analog breakout box, and limited real-time effects make this product worth its price.

—Eric Ross



rating ★★★★★

\$1,000, Matrox Electronic Systems Ltd.
www.matrox.com/video
800-361-4903

Real-time editing effects, dual monitor support, analog capture and playback

Little impact on final rendering time

PowerMac G4 733MHz

The PowerMac G4 733MHz is deservedly the top Apple machine at press time. It's quick on its feet, packs a strong list of inputs and outputs, and delivers a respectable 256MB RAM and 60GB hard drive. But the icing on this PowerMac is the SuperDrive, which burns CDs and DVDs without many problems.

This G4, with its various bus speeds (like how fast the RAM works), is made to move quickly. New to this unit is the 4X AGP slot, which allows faster graphics performance than compared to previous Macs. Applications like Final Cut Pro 2 and iMovie render video segments at noticeably quicker speeds than iMacs or previous G4s. Overall responsiveness and screen draws are fresh, keeping pace with your actions. An Nvidia GeForce2 MX video card in this test machine gives competent performance for games and other

3D applications.

The SuperDrive is the crowning achievement for this PowerMac. One of the first consumer drives that is able to burn DVDs that will work in a home DVD player (in addition to burning CDs), the SuperDrive brings a new realm of video power to a consumer level. Now, instead of emailing low quality iMovies or exporting back to tape, you can create an impressive DVD of your vacation.

The usual suspects of Apple's input and output package are present. Connect with AirPort, Ethernet, a modem, FireWire, and USB. A new digital audio-out jack works with Apple's revised Pro Speakers, and a regular headphone jack supports analog options. If you need to import sound from a microphone, get a USB adapter.



The Final Decision

This PowerMac is a complete package. With CD and DVD burning capabilities (and bundled software) out of the box that rival commercial applications,

mediaphiles might want the G4 733MHz just for its disc creation traits. But in addition to that, a large drive, fast performance, and complete connectivity interface make this G4 worthy of its top-of-the line clout.

— Zack Stern

rating ★★★★★

\$3,499, Apple Computer, Inc.
www.apple.com
800-692-7753

SuperDrive burns DVDs, fast, inputs and outputs

None

SoundBlaster Live!

The SoundBlaster Live! gives gamers, musicians, and audiophiles features that they didn't know they were missing. 4-channel surround-sound and a MIDI controller are the main reasons to consider this card. But a few problems like audio crackles, a second-rate software package, and lack of 5.1-channel support keep this away from a top score.

The SoundBlaster is your complete audio access point. Plug headphones, speakers, a microphone, and MIDI keyboard into the card.

A MIDI chip on the card means that even without an extra keyboard, the sounds and instruments will give a clearer result than a software solution.

Some Mac games also take special

advantage of the SoundBlaster. Deus Ex delivers sound in 3D, so if someone walks up behind you, the rear speakers will provide that information. Each game has to be adapted to take full use of the card.

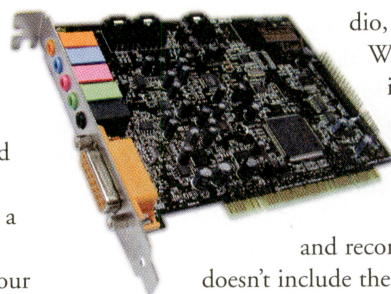
The SoundBlaster's software bundle is disappointing, although still of some use.

Cubasis AV, Mixman Studio, SoundJam MP, Sonic Works, and Deus Ex are included, but most of these have flaws that limit their use.

Cubasis AV, an audio sequencing

and recording application,

doesn't include the gamut of music samples that the original (though now dated) program provided. Mixman Studio lacks comprehensive sequencing and editing features that Mixman Studio Pro includes. SoundJam MP is a limited version of an MP3 playing and encoding application. Sonic Works, an effects generator, and action game Deus Ex are the only pieces that are complete.



Two other problems limited the SoundBlaster experience. Occasional, recurrent audio crackles reduced the overall quality. And while 4 channels of sound is a great improvement over two, PC audio cards and home theaters typically support a more rounded 5.1.

The Final Decision While the SoundBlaster isn't perfect because of its software bundle, audio crackles, and number of channels, it is a worthy upgrade for many users. If you're interested in dabbling in MIDI, need to add an analog-input to record sound, or want to game with surround-sound, take a listen.

— Zack Stern

rating ★★★★★

\$150, Creative
www.soundblaster.com
800-998-1000

Surround sounds good, MIDI capabilities, analog input

4 channels is limited, audio crackles, mixed bundle

Photoshop Elements

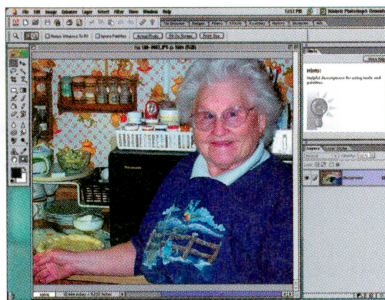
Adobe's Photoshop Elements,

aimed squarely at the consumer market, is a retooled version of the company's flagship image editor. The software is designed to work seamlessly with digital cameras to perform basic tasks such as red-eye reduction and color correction. Elements goes far beyond the call of duty, however, offering both novices and experts a gamut of useful tools that rival those available in its older sibling.

Elements includes a host of filters and effects to give your images a unique flair. In previous versions of Photoshop, users who weren't familiar with a filter often had to apply it to their image to gauge its effect. Not so with Elements. The software provides a handy thumbnail sample of each filter to help make your selection. It's a small nicety that adds greatly to the software's intuitive feel.

The application includes two helpful floating palettes called Hints and Recipes. The Hints palette automatically offers information and tips about whatever tool your mouse pointer rests on. The Recipes palette serves up a series of interactive and instructional tutorials that, among other things, can teach you how to remove a color cast or restore a damaged photo. Help is always a single click away.

One of Elements' most remarkable features is its ability to generate online picture galleries. Specify a folder of digital photos, and Elements will automatically copy and resize each photo, create a set of thumbnails, and combine the images into an HTML-based gallery. You need only upload the folder to your Website to show off your favorite images. Elements also includes a text warp tool,



impressionist brush, and traditional Photoshop tools such as Dodge and Burn, Clone Stamp, and Variations.

The Final Decision

Most casual users — and a good lot of designers — will be more than satisfied with Photoshop Elements' robust set of features. It's an inexpensive, intuitive, and indispensable image tool.

— Chris McVeigh

rating ★★★★★

\$99, Adobe Systems
www.adobe.com
800-833-6687

👍 Inexpensive, easy to use, interactive help features.

👎 None

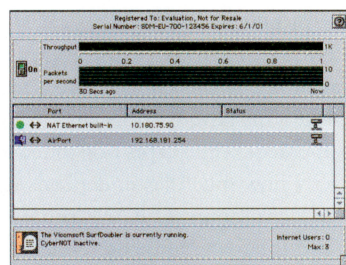
SurfDoubler 7.0

SurfDoubler is a software utility that allows your Macintosh to share its Internet connection with two other computers over a home network. It supports a gamut of Internet connections and protocols, including standard modem, cable modem, and DSL. The package also includes a personal firewall utility. Surf Doubler is a valuable tool for users who want to simultaneously access the Internet from multiple computers, but it is marred by a bewildering user interface.

SurfDoubler requires that you have an existing network in your home office. The software transforms the host Macintosh into a makeshift router, directing data from your Internet connection to the other computers on the network. Once the utility is installed, a setup assistant examines your network preferences, makes some calculated guesses, and then automatically configures the software. To access the Internet from another com-

puter on your home network, you need only open its TCP/IP control panel, select Ethernet from the Connect pop-up menu, and then select Use DHCP Server from the Configure pop-up menu.

But after my installation, the assistant incorrectly deduced that my main network interface was the AirPort card, despite the fact that I turned AirPort off before installing the software. I pored over the user manual and explored the software, but I could not figure out how to change the main network port from AirPort to Ethernet. Vicomsoft's technical support line (support is free, but you pay long-distance charges for the call) confirmed the setup assistant had made an error. After several attempts, armed with special instructions, I was able to access the Internet from a networked computer. It came at a cost, however: I could no longer access the Internet wire-



lessly from my iBook.

The Final Decision

Surf Doubler is far too complicated for a novice or intermediate. Even weathered professionals will be daunted by its cryptic controls. The software provides an important utility for home network users, but until its interface undergoes a radical simplification, it's better left on the shelf.

— Chris McVeigh

rating ★★☆☆

\$49, Vicomsoft
www.vicomsoft.com
877-732-5227
Requires Ethernet Network

👍 Three networked Macs can simultaneously access the Internet

👎 Overly technical interface, sloppy AirPort integration

Final Cut Pro 2

Industry Video Editing Standard Raises the Bar

Final Cut Pro 2 offers an array of effects and editing tools unequalled by any video editing software in its price range. Apple has made important changes, like faster rendering, in this latest version that make it easier than ever to use.

The effects made possible by using Final Cut Pro 2 and those created in a high-end Hollywood editing suite differ only in how long it takes to see those effects. Just as high-end editing systems costing five times as much owe their power to a combination of software and dedicated processing hardware, Apple has optimized this latest version of its software to take advantage of third party "real-time" video cards. Matrox, a maker of video processing cards has worked with Apple to create a real-time effects card to accelerate this version of Final Cut Pro.

So what's new in Final Cut Pro 2? Plenty; even without a

By Eric Ross

real-time board, FCP 2 is faster and more stable. This faster performance is especially apparent while capturing video into your hard drive. Exactly how much faster depends upon the specs of your Mac, such as amount of RAM, processor speed and quantity, and the material being rendered. Apple's claims of a 30% speed boost on single processors with Final Cut Pro 2 and a 70% boost on dual processor machines seem to be slightly overstated.

However, the use of mildly complex effects, applying video or audio filters, and exporting projects to QuickTime format required only slightly less rendering time than in the previous version.

You'll have to do less experimenting with setting preference due to improvements in Final Cut's user interface. The Final Cut Pro 2 setup procedure is simpler than the original by including pre-configured commonly used settings such as device control and capture. This feature will eliminate initial editing delays due to incorrect capture and sequence settings. A valuable improvement is the new smart media manager that allows you to track, delete, and move unused media. This manager reduces the chances of accidentally erasing necessary files when you clear out unused captured footage from your hard disk. Apple has included audio peak

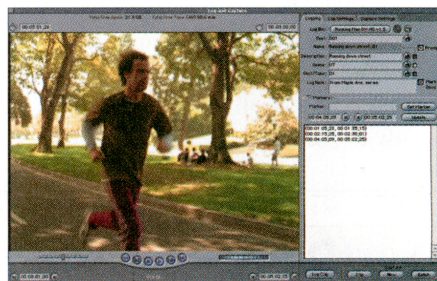
meters capable of monitoring sound levels during video capture and

playback, which are important tools to prevent capturing inaudible or distorted audio tracks. Significant improvements to the

titling system include the ability to create outlined, scrolling, and crawling text. You can now add a professional looking credit roll to the end of your production.

A quality that I've always liked about FCP is that there are usually multiple ways of performing the same task. In version 2 the documentation is complete and detailed via a whopping 1,440 page manual, leaving few editing procedures to trial and error.

The Final Decision Final Cut Pro's improvements to audio monitoring, media management, and simpler settings make it an easy and powerful application. Except for the disappointing rendering delays, Final Cut Pro is now close to achieving the same results as editing systems costing four or five times as much. If you do any professional editing, Final Cut Pro 2.0 is just what you need. **MH**



rating ★★★★★

\$999, (\$249 upgrade from FCP 1.25), Apple
www.apple.com
800-538-9696

👍 Powerful, well documented, optimized for real-time hardware
👎 Rendering required for most effects and filters

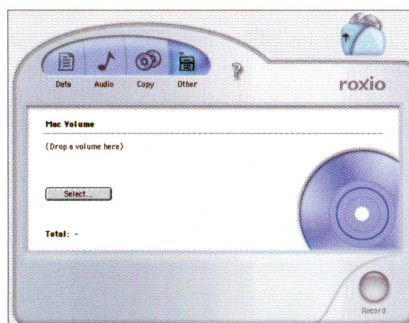
Toast 5 Titanium

If there's one product that sums up the experience of burning CDs on a Macintosh, Toast is it. This product continues to offer a quality solution for those who want to burn data CDs, make audio CDs, or copy disks through an easy-to-understand interface.

Roxio has made an already good piece of software better; a new Aqua-inspired look for Toast is at the top of a long list of awesome new features which include improved stability, faster background CD burning, an "abort burn" button, and even an iMovie plugin that can be used to burn Video CDs. Music enthusiasts will like how Toast 5 recognizes a wide range of sound formats (thanks to the employment of QuickTime), which allows you to create audio CDs from virtually any file (including MP3). What's more, Roxio simplified the Toast interface and provided access to the most

common tasks (like burning data to CDs, burning audio CDs, and copying disk images) through big, fat buttons in the main window. It's hard to list everything that's good about Toast 5 in one article; both amateurs and seasoned pros will be able to use it to get their diverse jobs done.

While there are few complaints to be made, it's worth noting that Toast 5 is a heavier, more demanding product than earlier versions, and older machines (like pre-G3s) may not run it fast enough for comfort. While higher system requirements are the price we pay for ever-improving software, the increased demand Toast 5 puts on an older Mac and the sluggish performance that goes with it may be more than you're willing to put up with.



The Final Decision

It's hard to imagine that the best CD burning software for Macs could possibly be made better, but Toast 5 is clear proof that it can be done through a better interface, better file format handling, and

an improved burning options. Regardless of whether you're a professional or hobbyist, this is a must-have product if you want to burn CDs.

— Corey Tamás

rating ★★★★

\$99, Roxio
www.roxio.com
303-684-3850

Flexible, powerful, easy to use, attractive interface

May be slow on older machines

Nisus Email

Nisus Email, like most other Nisus products, strives eagerly to "Think Different" by simplifying the experience of creating and managing email correspondence. It's an application that boasts features that no other email client can (like lightning-fast email composition), while at the same time lacking a few that are de rigueur, such as control over the interface and advanced mailbox sorting.

This light email client places a tiny, resizable window that floats above other program layers. By dragging and dropping text or files onto the tiny window, an email message is created in a split sec-

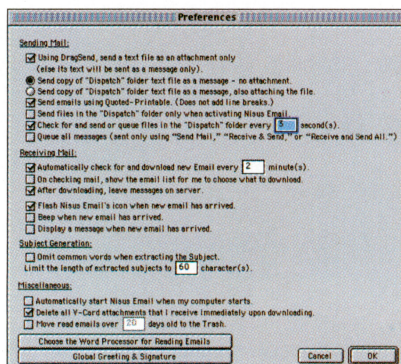
ond and sent to the contact of your choice. Unlike typical email applications, which require you to work in an email editor, Nisus Email allows you to compose messages in your favorite word processor, cut and send clips from a Web browser, and attach files directly from the desktop. This is of great benefit for those who want to compose within any application. What's more, Nisus Email has humble system requirements (a paltry 4 MB of RAM required), which makes it an ideal choice for PowerBooks or Macs that don't have a lot of muscle to spare.

But Nisus Email lacks some basic features such as an advanced search function, a robust set of keyboard shortcuts, and reasonable control over the look and feel of the interface. While Nisus Email offers a clever new method of composing

messages, it still lacks the interface and sorting power offered by the "A-list" email clients, and as such it can't replace them as a wholesale email solution.

The Final Decision Those who have been raised on Outlook and Eudora might have a hard time making a transition to this product, but the ease with which Nisus Email allows you to compose messages from within any application is clever. Due to its interface and mail management limitations, Nisus Email isn't for everyone, but it's a fine relief from the status quo.

— Corey Tamás



rating ★★★★

\$30, Nisus
www.nisus.com
800-890-3030

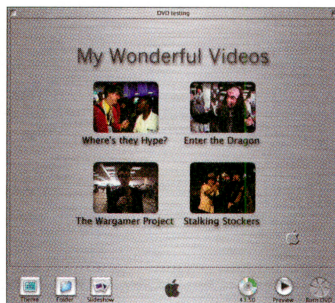
Fastest email composition around, light system requirements

Lacks advanced email management of Outlook or Eudora

iDVD

iDVD is, overall, an intuitive, direct way to compile movies into a DVD. The interface just relies on you dragging files and clicking a few buttons, and while the colors and fonts are gathered in templates, you can still customize most settings. Unfortunately, a "problem" with a video marred my experience; iDVD just belched out the DVD-R and delivered a cryptic message of error 32008. But iDVD is still worth using, despite much troubleshooting.

Bundled with Apple's SuperDrive DVD burner, iDVD is the central tool for importing video and stills to assemble a DVD. By just dragging files to the window, you construct the playback interface.



Still pictures can become slideshows to browse on your TV. While you're limited to six elements on the screen at a time, folders (or even nested folders) give more room to add files to a total hour length.

I was excited by the simplicity and power of assembling a DVD. The preview showed my disc was working right and ready to burn. It normally would have been just as simple as pushing the Burn button and inserting a blank DVD.

But after iDVD spent 40 minutes preparing my disc (it takes about twice as long as the length of your files), it aborted and ejected the DVD without explanation. After hours of phone calls and troubleshooting, I determined that one of the files was hanging up the disc even though the culprit video file had the exact same video specifications as the other files. It played fine in other applica-

tions. Why that file didn't work is beyond me. iDVD not only couldn't correct whatever the problem happened to be, it didn't even identify that segment, wasting my time and blank DVDs.

The Final Decision iDVD is fun to work with, and should make DVD burning a straightforward process. While I eventually got most of my videos onto a disc and had great fun watching them as a DVD on my TV, iDVD is due for a bug fix. If it could have just identified the problem file, my experience would have been much happier.

— Zack Stern

rating

Bundled with SuperDrive, Apple
www.apple.com
800-692-7753

 Quick DVD layout

 Couldn't clarify DVD burn error

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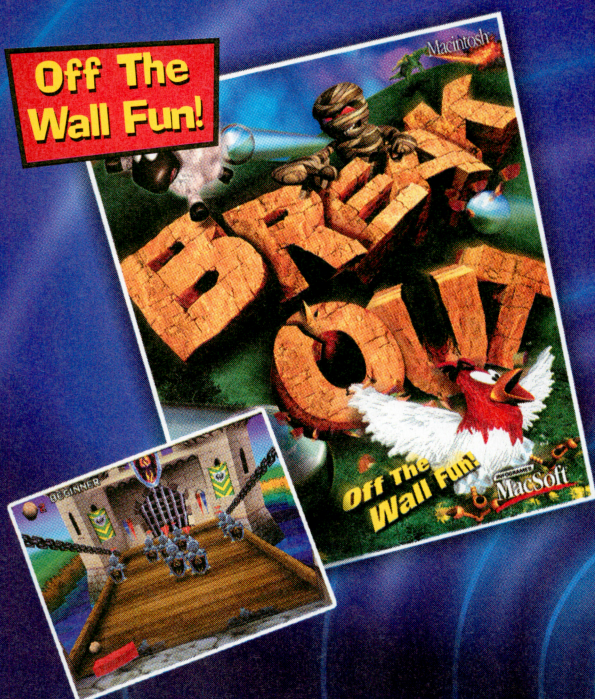
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MacSoft®

Physicus

If you've ever wanted to impress your friends in a pedantic, hoity-toity, starched collar sort of way, play Physicus. After they are informed that the game is a point-and-click adventure (think Myst) that relies on real-world scientific principles (don't think Myst), they will be thoroughly impressed. And by the end of Physicus, you will be impressed with your mastery of

thermodynamics, optics, electricity, acoustics, and mechanics... if you actually finish it and aren't overcome by a sense of intellectual inadequacy and boredom.

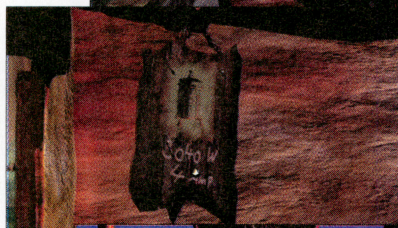
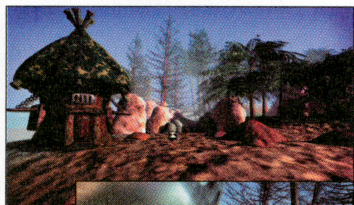
The premise is that a meteorite has crashed into a planet, causing it to stop rotating. A scientist constructs a gigantic impulse machine to force the planet back into its rotation, but before he finishes, he leaves (in an apparent fit of absent-mindedness). And that's when you show up in your spaceship ready to "save the world with science."

The world of Physicus is a pseudo-Victorian, mechanical place full of levers, pulleys, creaking doors, electrical switches, tele-

scopes, weights, and devices. The sound effects and soundtrack fit the overall aesthetic, but the gameplay falls short of expectations.

Being an edutainment title, the game has to fulfill two mandates at once: be educational and entertaining. It seems the former is stressed at the expense of the latter. The puzzles range from painfully difficult to arbitrarily easy and most require consulting at length the indexed Physics tutorial called the Laptop. Physicus is recommended for ages 10-102, but because of its difficulty, I wouldn't recommend it to anyone under 13.

— Christopher Leonard



rating  

Tivola
Ages 10-102, \$20
877-848-6520
www.tivola.com

Brain Buster

DK Interactive Learning's Brain Buster Quiz leads your child into "the brain buster experience": a world of trivia and corny jokes in an action-packed game show atmosphere.

Hosted by Seemore Skinless (a smart-cracking, lounge-lizard style emcee whose entrails are visible under his naked ribcage), the player selects a difficulty level, then chooses from categories like science, pop culture and reading comprehension.

Answering questions correctly scores points and moves the game forward. It's colorful and busy, which will at least temporarily catch the attention of some children.

Brain Buster Quiz has several problems. It's poorly optimized and runs slowly in spite of the game's relatively simplistic gameplay.

The interface is clunky, unintuitive, and is often unresponsive to the player's input, forcing the player to hit a key several times until the program notices. But the most underwhelming aspect of B.B.Q. is that it's not educational enough to be a good learning experience, but it's also not fun enough to be a decent game.

B.B.Q. does have some moments of inspired cuteness and is completely appropriate for kids, so no harm can be done in picking it up for your youngsters. Just don't expect them to fall madly in love with it. The clumsy interface and generic trivia make this a title to turn to when no other is available.

— Corey Tamas



rating  

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800-356-6575
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Kaplan Essentials: Biology & Chemistry

What do you call a program that drills students on photosynthesis, glucose degradation, and electron behavior? Boring? Not if you're talking about Kaplan Essentials: Biology & Chemistry. It's rigorous, but interesting, and the coordination of skill tests with review notes makes sure you've got a grasp on two tricky subjects.

Optional diagnostic tests in each subject pinpoint weak spots, but what really makes the tests useful is that results are coordinated with the review sections, which are organized into chapters, so you easily find the information you need to review. From there you move on to over 11 chapters in both biology and chemistry. The level of detail is impressive — I didn't expect such a wide range of topics, and that's really what makes

this review program stand out.

To measure progress, each chapter has quiz questions at the end. You get two tries to find the right answer, and the program is encouraging if you're wrong. Every correct answer is explained succinctly. You can go through a chapter more than once, but unfortunately the questions don't vary much,

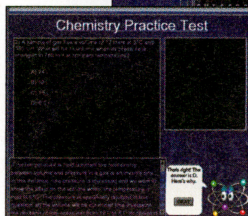
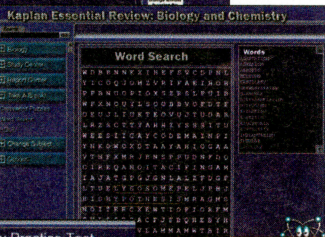
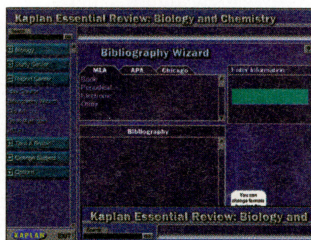
which diminishes the quizzes' value.

It's not all work and no play.

Subject-oriented crosswords and word searches pitch in for a study break. This area isn't as useful as it could've been, though, because no cross-reference to relevant study material is provided and vocabulary terms in the word search aren't linked to definitions.

Kaplan Essentials: Biology & Chemistry, with its depth, skillful testing, and helpful organization, is a program that even "A" students will find useful.

— Sandy Brundage



rating ★★★★★

Encore Software
Ages 14 and up, \$20
www.encoresoft.com
310-719-2890

I Love Phonics

DK Interactive Learning's I Love Phonics is a learning game that seeks to teach young kids valuable reading lessons. The game takes place in a cartoon "fun-house" that children explore by clicking on various items and areas, which lead to short lessons or games that are designed to teach phonics. DK recommends ages 4 to 7 for I Love Phonics, and this is definitely appropriate as it's the age when children start reading in earnest.

In the I Love Phonics fun-house, kids are encouraged by spoken instruction to click and explore the lessons and games, which gives kids a good, nonlinear route through which to learn at their own pace.

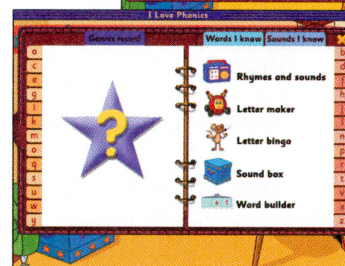
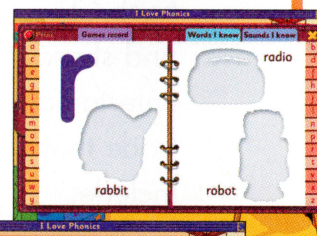
The games themselves include mix-and-match and identifying

letter sounds as the basis of gameplay, while the lessons are straightforward and spoken to the player in a clear manner.

The content is definitely age-appropriate, but the potential for a really simple, easy learning experience is mired somewhat by the interruption of unnecessarily long (and frequently boring) cut-scenes as well as a sluggish, unresponsive interface. What's more, clicking around in the funhouse can be frustrating, as it is unclear which elements of what the child sees are interactive and which aren't.

I Love Phonics is a decent collection of simple lessons about phonics for your 4 to 7 year old and is likely to hold their attention for at least a short time, though younger kids might be frustrated by the weak user interface.

— Corey Tamas



rating ★★★★★

DK Interactive
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www.dk.com
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www.aspyr.com
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Comic Mischief
Suggestive Themes
Use of Tobacco
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Make Your Games Run Better

Speed Up Frame Rates, and Keep Your Games Working

Games deliver a lot of entertainment to the Mac user, but they ask a lot, too. Sometimes a computer struggles to keep up with the latest, greatest games due to their heavy system and video requirements.

If you're experiencing sluggish performance in your favorite game, fear not; you can restore some of your Mac's muscle through three basic steps: update, upgrade, and tweak.

Update

Update your software first, as it breathes new life into any program. Check for updates to the game itself, as almost every game has a patch or two. Then, check for updates to hardware drivers, which will squeeze peak performance out of video cards, sound cards, and any other game-related hardware. You'll almost always find these updates at the game publisher's or hardware company's Website. Check for

that address on the box or in the manual.

Aside from company Websites, try www.macupdate.com, www.versiontracker.com,

and www.macgamefiles.com to locate current patches.

Don't neglect updating the Mac OS (www.apple.com). Software Update, a control panel (or system preference in Mac OS X), searches the Internet and updates your system software.

Upgrade

If you want the best game performance, you may have to drop a few bucks on new hardware for your Mac. All games like having ample RAM (which makes a game run faster and smoother), so you can't go wrong by adding more. For some modern games like *Oni* or *Quake III*, 128MB RAM can be enough, but 192MB RAM or more is better.

Should you need a little 3D acceleration (check the box to see if your game does), there's a wide range of possibilities. Macs that come with an ATI Rage 128 card will get okay performance on 3D games, but an ATI Radeon or Nvidia GeForce card will deliver higher frame rates and better effects with the newest games. Anything less than these

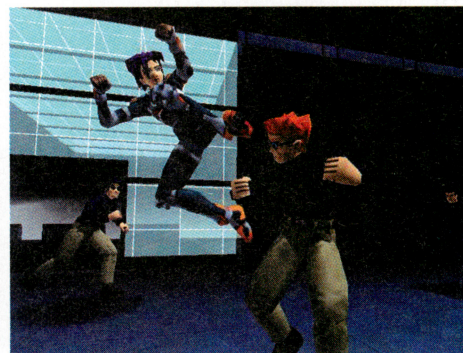
models (like, a Rage II or Rage Pro) will likely deliver weak performance for 3D gaming, so upgrading is a must. Try the Radeon from ATI

(www.ati.com) or a GeForce from the Apple Store (www.store.apple.com). Don't know what kind of video card your Mac uses? Don't worry. The Apple System Profiler (located in the Apple menu) will gladly tell you.

For iMac users, upgrade potential is limited. RAM can be added copiously, but you're stuck with whatever video card you've got. iMacs are slightly underpowered for hardcore titles like *Quake* or *Unreal*, but generally fine for 2D or board-type games like *Starcraft* or *Risk II*.

Tweak

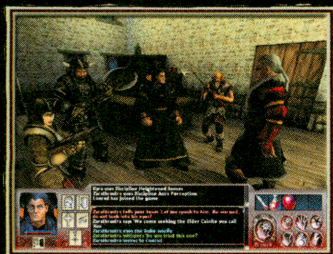
Most games have an options menu that allows you to tweak elements that affect performance. Start by looking for words like "quality," "detail," and "color depth," and set them for the lowest setting available. After that, increase them a little at a time to strike a balance between a game that runs to your satisfaction, but looks good; it's a season-to-taste kind of thing. Also, search the Internet for hints and tips on how to improve game performance. Some good sites to check are www.macgamer.com, www.insidemacgames.com, and www.xlr8yourmac.com, or use Sherlock to search for specific games. **MH**



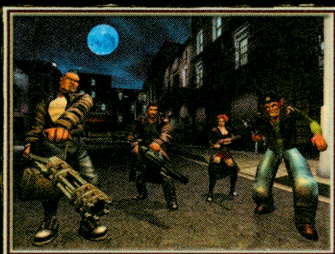
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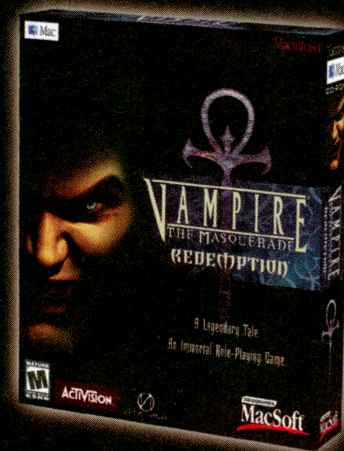
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Myst III: Exile

Myst III: Exile is an effective extension of the Myst world. Exile even innovates, and delivers new, semi-3D gameplay where you can see 360° around your character. With smooth music, localized puzzles, developed characters, and this new way to look at lush lands, Exile defines adventure games. Exile isn't perfect, however, and you'll hit some difficulties moving through its universe. But even with this flaw, Exile is worth picking up.

Carrying on the tradition of the previous two Myst games,

Myst III: Exile puts players on a quest to learn why Saavedro has vowed revenge against Atrus. As you follow Saavedro through several



rating ★★★★★

Ubi Soft Entertainment
\$40
www.ubisoft.com
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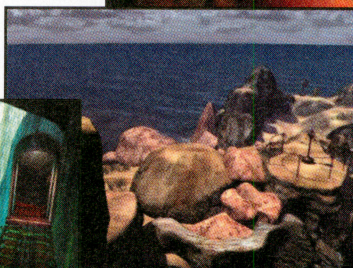
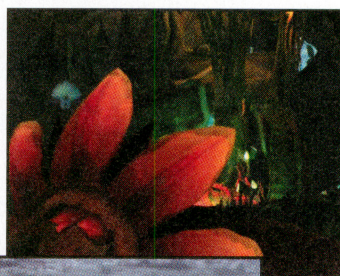
different worlds, the plot is revealed by his journal notes and videos. It's uncommon to find a villain with his depth in any medium, and Saavedro is especially welcome in a game.

The first Myst adventures were described as "slideshows"; clicking moved you around, but each flat image was a single-pane view into the game. Exile lets you swing your view around in any direction. While still only able to stand at certain points, you can now fluidly look around. And the sense of immersion is completed by the active worlds with ambient life, rippling water, and hot suns. Rich sound effects and music also draw you into the story.

Unique to this chapter of Myst, the puzzles are localized. A few require walking between areas, but most can be solved from a single location or along a path, keeping the game lively.

While it's easy to get lost in the moment, the biggest problem with Exile is getting lost in a scene. Paths would be clearer

if the mouse icon changed to give visible feedback if you can walk in a certain direction. As it is, some areas force you to click everywhere to see if you can venture forward. Also, it's easy to get disoriented in certain places — like the organic world — because you may move farther forward than expected, often passing something of interest.



Even with the lack of feedback and sometimes disorienting movement, Myst III: Exile is easy to recommend. Its characters, story, and detail make a complete adventure. Exile even improves upon the juggernaut Myst series with a more engaging environment that lets you look in any direction. If you missed the other games, Exile is a jumping-off point into this adventure series.

— Zack Stern

What Makes an Adventure?

Escape from Monkey Island and Myst III: Exile are both adventure games although Monkey Island carries a lighter tone. The way to progress in these games is to explore, notice your surroundings, and try everything.

These two titles reward experimentation. In Escape from Monkey Island, talk to everyone about everything. Try using your objects on your surroundings or just giving them away. You won't be able to do anything "wrong" that will stop the game's progression. In Exile, click everywhere, examine everything, and play with any buttons and levers you find. Exile is about discovering your surroundings and how they work; the only way to engage the plot is to experiment with your situation.

Escape from Monkey Island

Escape from Monkey Island, the fourth in the respected Monkey Island series (number three skipped a Mac release) is a good reflection of this swashbuckling world of pirate adventure. While this title's wit and lightness resemble the pervious games, it preserves the series instead of invigorating it. But the graphics, puzzles, and story present a good Monkey Island game even if others were better.

Escape from Monkey Island is an adventure game where you lead under-appreciated pirate Guybrush Threepwood on a quest to stop evil pirates from taking over his favorite islands. Created with a 3D engine, you can walk through scenes from a third-person perspective. Different vantage points provide

unique angles on your movement like varied shots in a TV show; "cameras" cut to close-ups or wide shots when relevant.

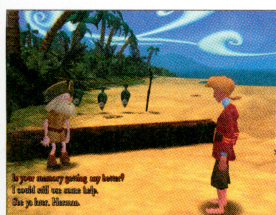
Escape from Monkey Island is a good game, but it's filled with many average aspects. The movement controls can be tricky at times;

instead of just clicking objects and where you want to go as in previous Monkey games, everything is

accessed by the keyboard. Music and sound effects add ambiance to the game, but wouldn't be worth much alone. And the story, while amusing enough in most respects, is slow enough at some points to wear down the player.

It's tough to follow a classic or even cult series like the Monkey Island games. While Escape from Monkey Island is worth checking out — and certainly fits with the other games in the series — it lacks the musical score, humor, and direct control that the previous games provided.

— Zack Stern



rating 

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\$45
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Pro Pinball: Fantastic Journey

Pro Pinball: Fantastic Journey is accurate enough to be more than a game; it's a great simulation of a pinball table. Starting with a fun table — lots of ramps, variety, and targets — Fantastic Journey mixes spot-on physics and sound. Stop wasting quarters, and cozy up with your Mac.

As most pinball machines have stories that dictate which targets to hit, Fantastic Journey is no different.

While contrived, the stories lead you through various adventures; fire the ball at the lit target to progress. In addition to that, several game objectives like hitting ramps in a sequence and different versions of multiball play stop the game from growing very repetitious.

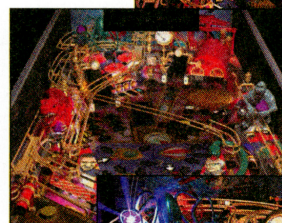
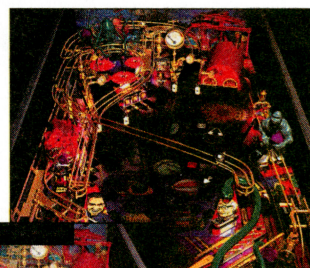
Beyond the specific targets to hit, the table design also provides variety. Several ramps and a good pace that keeps the ball moving closely resemble top pinball machines.

The music and sound effects match a real machine, too. Bumpers, drop targets, and the rest of the table bounce, click, and ring like they belong in an arcade. The music track changes depending on your objective, and while it tends to repeat, the tunes and goals change quickly enough that it doesn't detract from the game.

Two sporadic bugs are disappointing in this otherwise polished game, but they are also easily overlooked. Under certain circumstances, one of the arrows that lights a target to hit doesn't function, and the outline of a rotating toy sometimes bleeds into its surroundings.

Minor quirks aside, Pro Pinball: Fantastic Journey closely matches a real pinball machine. With smooth gameplay and accurate physics, Fantastic Journey could turn you into a pin fanatic.

— Zack Stern



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Sharing Files with Mac OS X

Using Your Public Folder to Distribute Documents

The quickest way to transfer documents and other data between two Macs is with a home network. Last month, we discussed file sharing with Mac OS 9. This month we turn our attention to sharing between computers with Mac OS X.

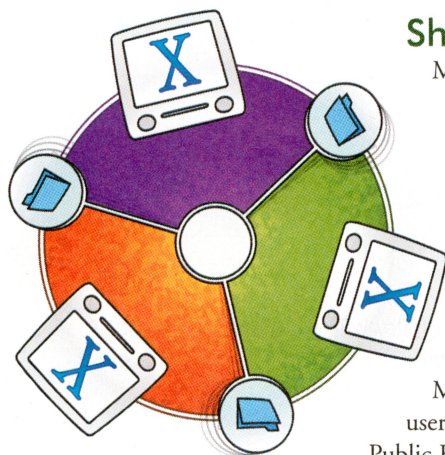
Getting Started

First, a short recap. To physically connect both computers, you'll need to purchase an Ethernet crossover cable (\$10) from your local computer store. Simply plug one end of the cable into the Ethernet port of one Macintosh, and then route it to the Ethernet port of the other Macintosh.

On a Mac running OS X, select System Preferences from the Apple Menu, and click on the Network icon in the top row. Choose Built-in Ethernet from the configure menu, and click on the AppleTalk tab. Check the option to Make AppleTalk Active, and then click Save. Now, click the Show All icon in the top left. Locate the Sharing Icon in the bottom row and click on it. All you need to do is click the Start button to initiate File Sharing, and you're ready to share your documents.

By Chris McVeigh

the Apple Menu, and click on the Network icon in the top row. Choose Built-in Ethernet from the configure menu,



Sharing Basics

Mac OS X shares files somewhat differently than Mac OS 9. The most obvious change is enhanced security through the use of a Public Folder. Instead of allowing access to your entire hard drive (the way we set up file sharing last month using Mac OS 9), Mac OS X limits network users to the contents of your Public Folder. Network users can't

simply toss files anywhere on your computer, either. The Public Folder contains a Drop Box that provides a single location for users to copy files to your computer. The Drop Box cannot be opened by network users, however, so people can send you files secure in the knowledge they will not be viewed by prying eyes. Although this security is great for a large office network, it may be overkill for the home.

To access your Public Folder, select Home from the Go menu or click the Home icon in a Finder window. You should find the Public Folder in the bottom left. You must place your documents (or a copy of them) in this folder to share them over the network.

Logging In

To access your Public Folder from another Mac OS X-based Macintosh, select Connect to Server from the Go menu. A new window appears. Clicking on Local Network in the left pane brings up the other computer's name at the right. Click once on the computer's name to highlight it, and then click the Connect button in the lower left to access the login window. Click Guest and then press Connect. That's it! You're now connected to the other Macintosh's Public Folder.

Mac OS 9 users can also access Mac OS X servers. Select Chooser from the Apple Menu and click on the AppleTalk icon. The name of the second computer should immediately appear to the right (if it does not, open the AppleTalk control panel and ensure Ethernet is selected). Double-click on the computer name to access to login window. Click Guest and then press Connect, and you're ready to swap documents. **MM**

Speech Synthesis

How a Computer Voice Is Generated

Since its development in the early 1980s, speech synthesis has served as an omen of a looming robotic age for many of us. Although we're still nowhere near cybernetic personal assistants, speech synthesis continues to be a futuristic marvel.

In order to generate speech, a computer needs a library of "phonemes." Phonemes are the smallest, most basic sounds of language, which include all vowel, consonant and compound letter pronunciations. (The word "cot," for example, contains three distinct phonemes: "cuh," "ah," and "tuh.")

As you might imagine, there are hundreds of different phonemes. The phonemes can be electronically generated, but this tends to result in overly robotic speech. Most modern speech synthesis software derives its phoneme library from digital samples of a real human voice. A voice actor sits in a studio and reads word after word, and afterwards a sound engineer plunders the recorded voice track for individual phonemes.

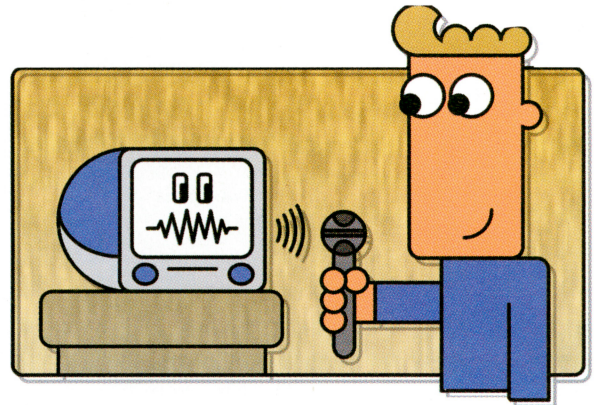
Apple's Agnes, Bruce, and Victoria are three such voices.

By Chris McVeigh

(The high-quality alternatives of these voices make use of higher quality phoneme samples to deliver a richer, purer voice.)

Speech is synthesized by stringing together a series of phonemes. The software carefully examines the word to be spoken, divides it into phonemes and then verbalizes. The word "park" is created by joining the phonemes "puh," "ah," "er," and "kuh." Standard English rules help the speech synthesis engine pronounce words correctly. The word "mat," for instance, is pronounced with a short vowel, while "mate" is pronounced with a long vowel due to the addition of a silent e.

Unfortunately, speech synthesis is not simply a matter of building words from phoneme samples and following simple rules. English, like most languages, is full of wonderful inconsistencies in spelling and pronunciation. Consider the differences between the words "gear" and "pear." They look very similar, and to those unfamiliar with English, they might even appear to rhyme. And yet they do not — the pronunciation of "gear" is different than "pear." There is no way for the speech software to make this distinction without



knowing this arbitrary rule in advance. Since there are so many such nuances in our language, the software must make use of an elaborate cheat sheet to ensure speech is synthesized correctly.

Other challenges for speech synthesis software include proper inflection and emphasis. Consider how our voice changes when we ask a question. As we approach the end of the sentence, the pitch of our voices raises. Speech software must be able to replicate the change in tone in order for a sentence to be understood as a question. In this example, "The dog ran down the street," can be altered to a question by raising the pitch as the sentence progresses. Emphasis is equally important, whether it's within a multi-syllable word or an entire sentence. "Marshmallow," for example, carries verbal emphasis on "marsh." It would sound odd if the emphasis was placed elsewhere.

Although there has been some progress in speech synthesis over the last 10 years, the jarring awkwardness of voices like Apple's Victoria reveal there is still work left to be done. It will be many years yet before we hear the calming clarity of 2001's HAL coming from a computer. **MM**

List Orders, G3 or G4, and USB Microphones

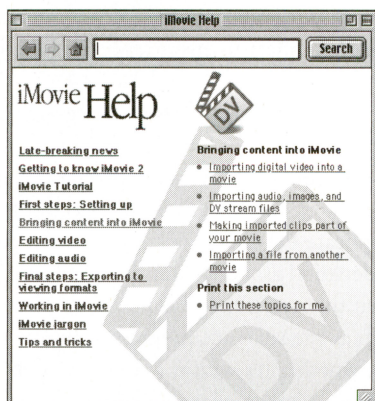
Mac Manuals

Q Help! I really need to find a User's Manual for my iMac DV. I didn't get one in the box when I purchased the computer. I recently bought a Sony digital camcorder and I would really like to know how to use it with the iMac.

— C. Rumptz

A All of Apple's product manuals are now available online in Adobe PDF format at www.info.apple.com/manuals/manuals.taf. Unfortunately, Apple's latest manuals are rather brief. The iMac manual you're seeking will provide little information on how to use your digi-

By Chris McVeigh



tal camcorder with your computer. Instead, you should turn to the Mac OS Help Center already installed in your iMac. Go to the Finder and select Help Center from the Help menu. Once it appears, locate iMovie Help in the column at the right. Click

on it once to bring up a selection of iMovie topics. The fifth item listed on the left explains how you can "Bring content into iMovie." Once you click this link, a new selection of topics appears at the right. Click "Import digital video into iMovie" to learn how you can grab video from your digital camcorder and manipulate it within iMovie.

A-to-Z or Z-to-A

Q I like to view folder contents as lists, but the contents of my disk appear in reverse alphabetical order. It is the only folder in which this has happened. How can it be corrected?

— Steve Maynard

A Double-click your hard drive icon to view its contents. At the far right, just above the vertical scroll bar, you should see an inverted triangle made out of four short black lines. Click this once. The contents of your hard drive will now be listed alphabetically, from A to Z. Clicking the triangle once more will reverse the listing again. This feature works with any list view, too. Let's say you decided to list the contents by Date Modified instead. Clicking the triangle allows you to view your files and folders from latest to earliest and vice-versa.

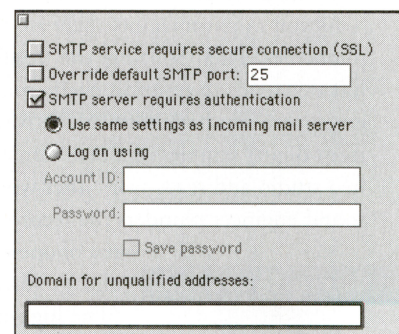
Mac.com Mail

Q I've got an new iMac and everything works just great, with one exception. I cannot seem to send email with my mac.com address! I'm using Outlook Express 5.0.2, and I

input all the information as Apple described. What am I missing?

— Dirk Hoffman

A Apple's email server requires authentication in order to send messages. Although this might sound complicated, you only need to make a single change to your email account preferences to get up to speed. Launch



Outlook Express and select Accounts from the Tools menu. Double-click the entry for mac.com to make changes to your account. A new window appears. Near the bottom, you will find a section titled Sending Mail. Input "smtp.mac.com" as the SMTP server. Now, click below the button below the text box to change the advanced sending options. Check the third option listed in the pop-up window to tell Outlook Express that the "SMTP server requires authentication." You also must be sure to select the option to "Use the same settings as the incoming mail server." Close the pop-up window, and then click OK. You're now ready to send email via the mac.com server!

One Better than a G3?

Q I am a PC user looking to upgrade my home computer this year. My primary use for this computer will be digital video editing, word processing, and the usual Internet applications. I'm considering a Macintosh, but I have a few questions. I just can't decide between a high-end iMac or low-end Power Macintosh. First, will video editing be faster with a 400MHz G4 or a 600MHz G3? Secondly, does OS X run faster with a G4 than on a G3? I really hope you can help!

— Alan Edwards

A Processor speed and performance cannot be judged on numbers alone. Let's consider the performance differences of PowerPC processors. A PowerPC G3 and PowerPC G4 processor running at identical speeds will perform similarly for many tasks. This means you can accomplish certain tasks on a 500MHz iMac as fast as you can on a 500MHz Power Macintosh G4. The PowerPC G4 has an ace up its sleeve, however: a built-in processing enhancement dubbed the Velocity

take advantage of the Velocity Engine.

Since you're purchasing the computer for video editing, you're in need of a high-speed computer that can handle a lot of number crunching. Your decision really comes down to a question of application support for the Velocity Engine and the level of professionalism you expect from the application. Apple's iMovie 2, for example, does not advertise support for the Velocity Engine. On the other hand, Apple's Final Cut Pro has been tailored to take advantage of both the Velocity Engine and multi-processor Power Macintosh systems. iMovie is intended for the home user and is included free with every new Macintosh, while Final Cut Pro is \$999 and is intended for professionals. It might be best to start with an iMac and upgrade to a Power Macintosh G4 as your needs grow.

The Macs Are Listening

Q I have a dual processor Power Macintosh G4, and I'd really like to use Speakable Items. The G4 has no microphone, though, so I'm at a bit of a loss. Can I purchase an external microphone?

— Edwin J. Parks

A One of the best solutions for your computer is Andrea's NC-7100 headset microphone (\$70, www.andreaelectronics.com). It's especially suited to voice recognition and

plugs into any available USB port. The discerning consumer will also appreciate the interchangeable color-coordinated plastics to match the microphone to your Power Macintosh. It's important to note that the NC-7100 is included with IBM's ViaVoice Enhanced Edition speech recognition application for the Macintosh (\$120), so if you are serious about using speech on your computer, you might consider spending the extra \$40 upfront. **MM**



Engine. Applications written to take advantage of the Velocity Engine give the PowerPC G4 a significant performance edge over an equivalently powered PowerPC G3.

Although Mac OS 9 performs similarly on both processors, Mac OS X takes advantage of the Velocity Engine, making it appreciably faster on Power Macintosh G4s. Processor speed is not a moot point, however. A 600MHz G3 might very well outpace a 400MHz G4 for most tasks — including those that

MacHome Quiz

Answers from page 27

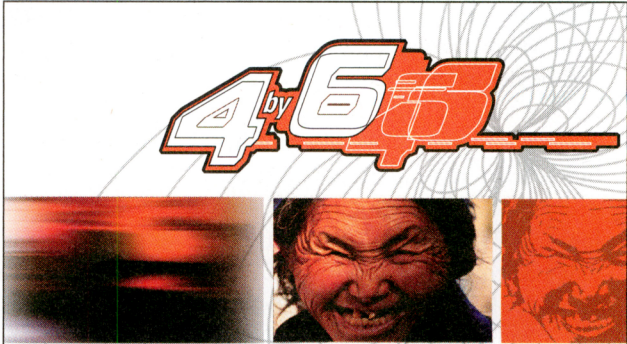
1. Open the Print Center application (in the Utilities folder) to configure a printer.
2. USB is Universal Serial Bus, and it's how you connect keyboards, mice, printers and other peripherals.
3. Shut the computer down, then hold the T key at boot. Plug that computer into another FireWire Mac, and the first behaves like an external drive.
4. Choose Shut Down from the Apple Menu, or tap the power key. When the dialog box asks if you want to Shut Down, click OK.
5. The new iBook is 1.3-inches thick, and is one of Apple's smallest portables ever.
6. A Video CD will work in most consumer DVD players, and it carries video of about the same quality as VHS tape.
7. An Ethernet crossover cable will connect two Macs as a small network.
8. Read-only memory has already been created, and you can only see what is on and copy from that media. Random-access memory lets you read and write to the media.
9. Adding more RAM to a computer is the best way to extend its power. 192MB RAM is a useful amount for most users.
10. Push command-period to cancel almost anything.

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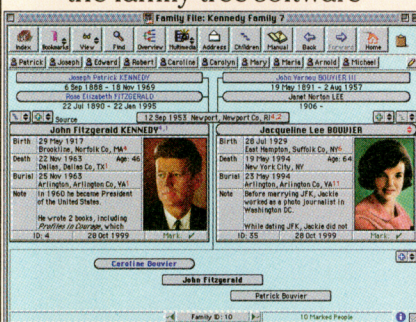
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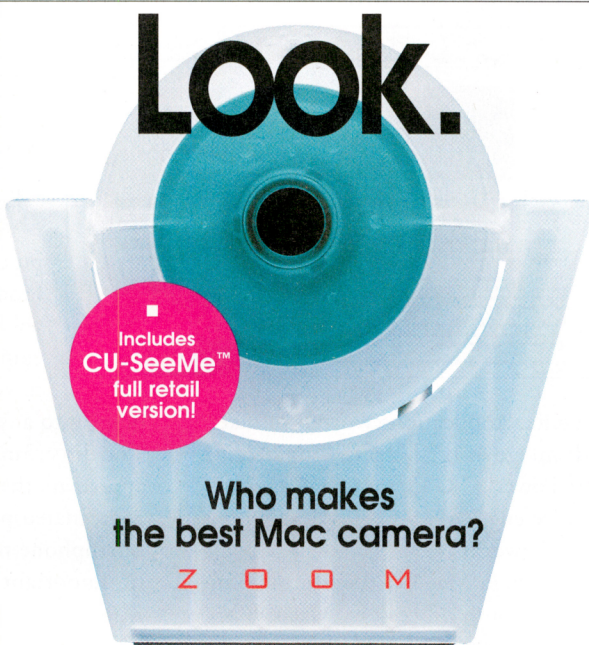
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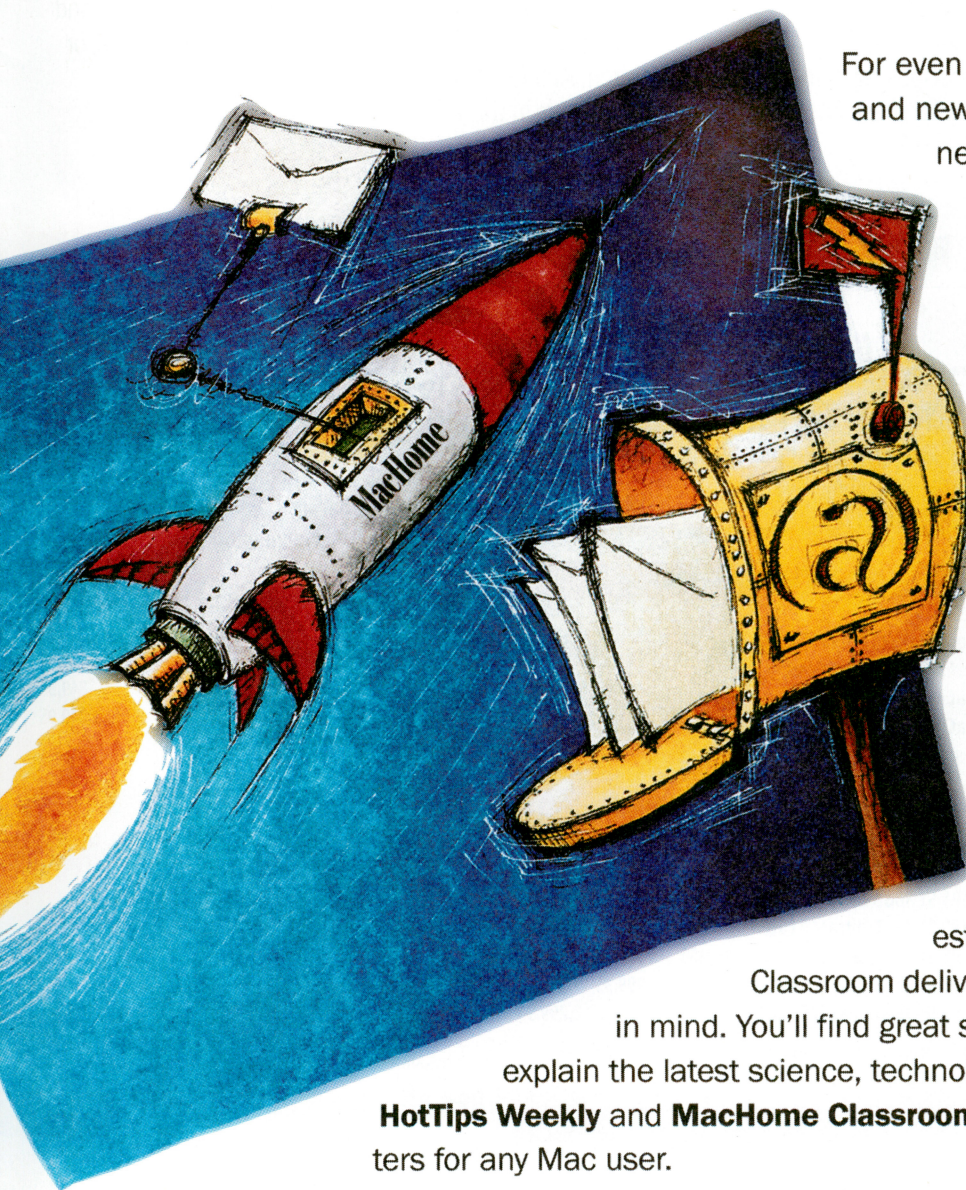
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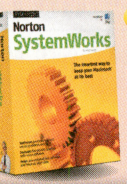
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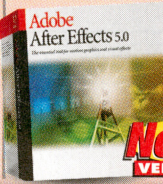
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CD-RW **YES**
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FREE RAM **128MB**
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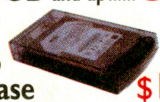
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MacHome magazine, in conjunction with the Apple Developer Connection, built this very special Mac OS X Showcase section to keep you, our valued reader, apprised of the hottest products built especially to take advantage of Apple's new operating system. You can rest assured that this new section will grow with each passing month, spotlighting the coolest new products for Mac OS X. Be sure to check the Mac OS X Showcase monthly for a wide variety of new and innovative solutions that will make your Macintosh and Mac OS X experience as enjoyable as possible.



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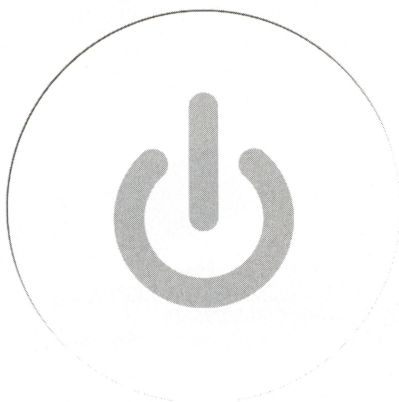
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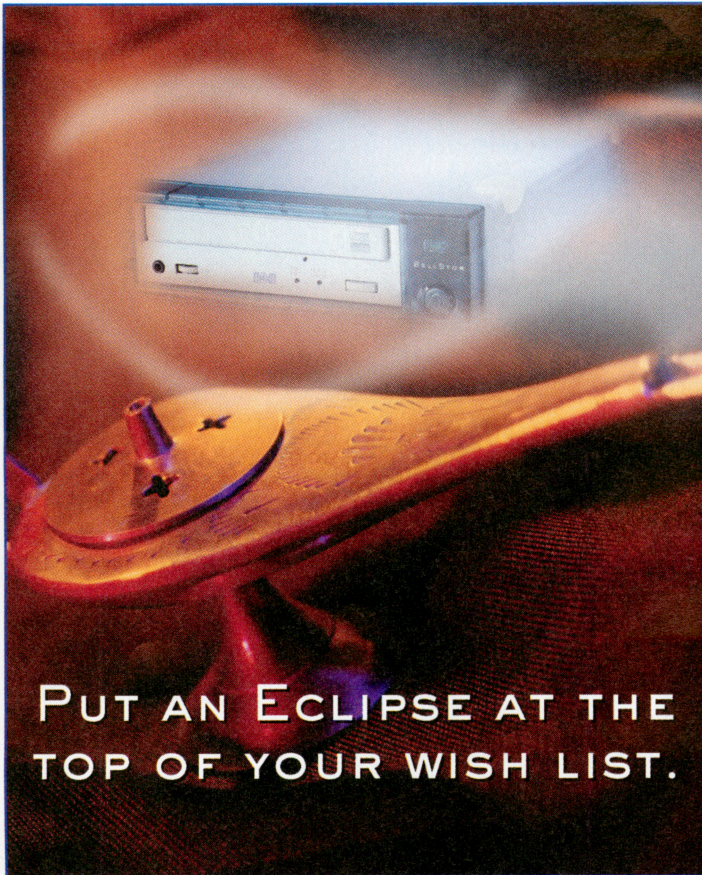
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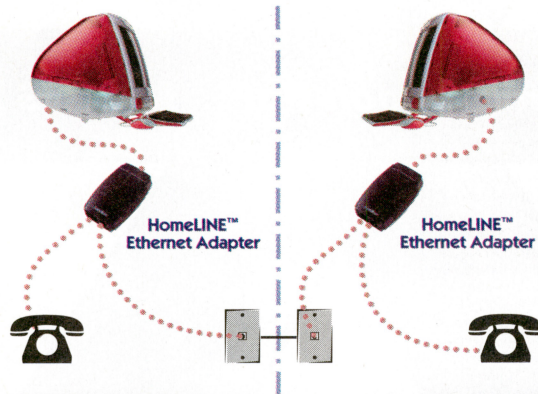
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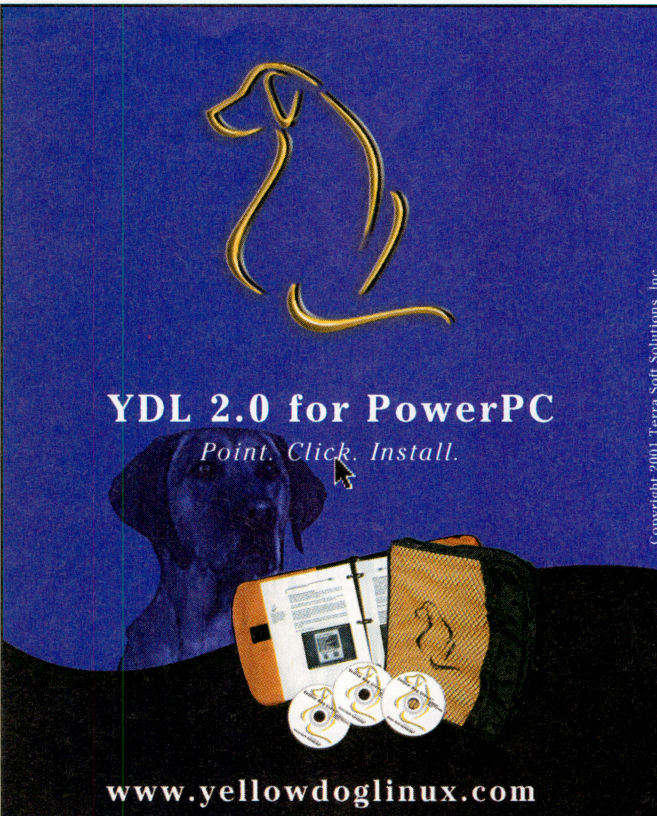
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- * 5 Frames Per Second
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- * 2 1/2" Touch Screen Precision Color LCD Monitor
- * Precision Color Viewfinder (200,000 pixels)
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- * 10x optical/120x digital zoom
- * SteadyShot Image Stabilizer

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- * Carl ZeissTM Vario-Sonner Lens
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DCR TRV-30/17

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- * 1260x1020 Digital Still Images
- * Intelligent Pop Up Flash
- * Der Trv 17: * 10X Optical/120X Digital Zoom
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- * 25x optical And 450x digital zoom
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- * Photo mode captures a still image with seven seconds of audio narration

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Der Trv 530: Has a large 3.5" swivel LCD color display

Der Trv 730: Has a 4" LCD display

Der Trv 830: Same as 730. Includes dye sub printer.

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CALL

Optura PI.....Call	ZR-20MC.....Call
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P-330N

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 Olympus C-3030

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 Olympus D-360
 Olympus D-490
 Olympus C-211

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 Nikon D1 Pro SLR
 Nikon D1X Pro SLR
 Sony MVC-FD87

 Sony MVD-FD92
 Sony Cybershot P1
 Sony Cybershot 505V
 Sony Cybershot P-30

 Sony Cybershot P-50
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 Canon Powershot A-20
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• 2.5" Flexible LCD View Screen

Canon

GL-1 ZR-20



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SONY

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Nikon

Coolpix 995 Coolpix 775



• 3.34 Megapixel
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Import a Contact List, Extra Dock Functions, and Get Classic Started

Preparing Classic Applications

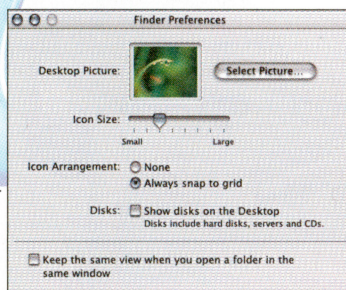
Some Mac OS 9 applications, such as Microsoft Word, require several support files installed in the System Folder, which are installed when you first launch the application. So long as you've chosen to install Mac OS X over your existing Mac OS 9.1 System Folder, you won't have problems running any of your favorite Mac OS 9 applications. However, if you've opted to be a bit more cautious and installed Mac OS 9.1 and Mac OS X on a different hard drive, or even if you performed a Clean Install of Mac OS 9.1, there may be trouble with Office. Launch Microsoft Word under Mac OS X, and you will get a message that the application cannot be run because important files are missing.

By Zack Stern
& Chris McVeigh

The solution is to start up your computer with Mac OS 9. Open the Startup Disk system preference. Now, select the Mac OS 9 folder used by the Classic Environment. Close the window, and select Restart from the Apple Menu. Once Mac OS 9 loads, launch Microsoft Word. Microsoft Office First Run will launch and install all the required files into the System Folder. It's a good idea to test run all your Mac OS 9 applications to ensure they function properly under Mac OS X. After you're done, open the Startup Disk control panel, select Mac OS X (ignore the warnings), and click Restart. You're all set now!

Changing Your Desktop Picture

Mac OS 9 allowed you to change your desktop picture through the Appearance control panel. Under Mac OS X the Appearance control panel has



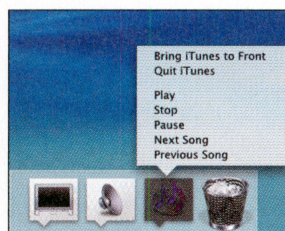
Preferences from the Finder menu. The first option listed in

the Finder Preferences windows is Desktop Picture. Click once on the adjacent button to select a different background. Apple's got a great selection of new images to choose from. Or select any previous image you had used under Mac OS 9.

Docklings

One of the great features of Mac OS 9's Control Strip is its quick access to common system settings like your volume and display resolution. Mac OS X's Dock is slowly rolling in those functions with little items called docklings. These little utilities are shaped like a dialogue box, and they add direct access and monitors for some system preferences.

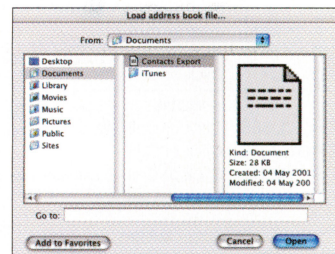
You may already have docklings from Apple for iTunes, your display, battery, and AirPort. Third-party docklings add quick volume controls, an audio CD player, and more. Visit www.apple.com/downloads/dock_extras/ to add more functions and tricks to the powerful Dock.



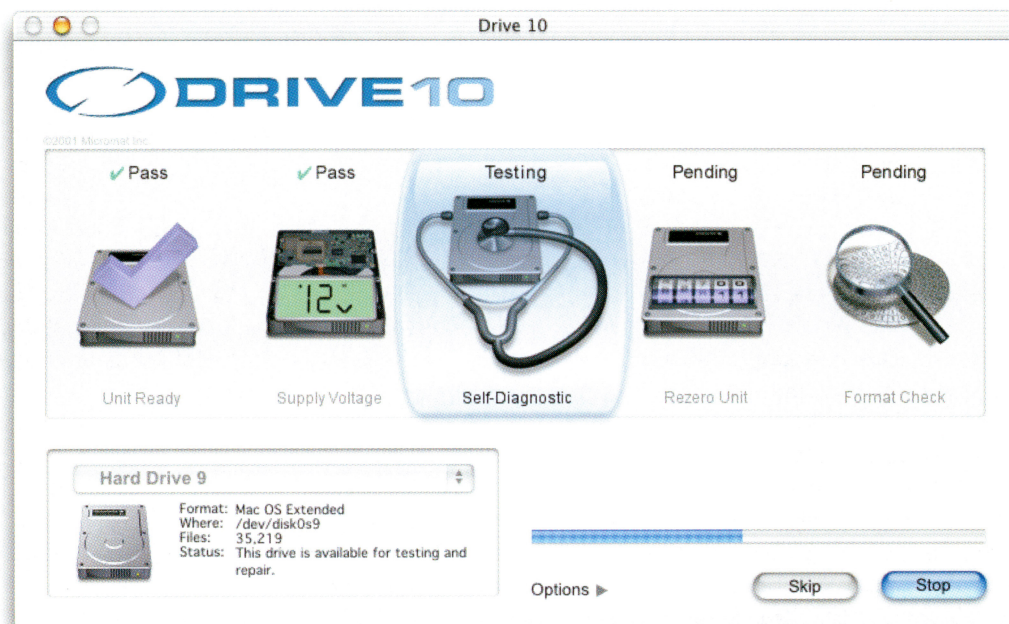
Contact

Mac OS X's included Mail application handles all email needs. With an iTools or other mail account, this application spell-checks, sends, and receives with style. If you had previously used another email client, you can import your contacts for direct addressing.

First export the contact list in your old email application. In Entourage, click once on the address book, then Export Contacts from the File menu. The trick now is not to launch Mail, but instead open Address Book among Mac OS X's included applications. Choose Import from the File menu, select the old contacts list, and click Open. Now Mail can complete addresses based on the Address Book. **MH**



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